Nottinghamshire County Council

Rushcliffe Borough Council

The Greater Nottinghamshire

Proposal for Local Government Reorganisation:

Appendices

Safer > Simpler > Stronger

Our vision for two next-generation councils

Appendices:

Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Councils

Local Government Reorganisation

July 2025

Contents

Options Appraisal for Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils in line with the requirements of the Government's English Devolution White Paper published in December 2024.

1. Executive Summary

PwC supported the production of this report (which details the results of collaborative discussions between the councils) and:

- *Assisted with the options appraisal of the different formations of unitary council we have considered.*
- *Conducted financial analysis of those unitary options.*

For the avoidance of doubt, PwC's input was provided solely with our interests in mind, for our use only, and may not be relied upon by any other party.

Executive Summary: Summary

This document provides and options analysis for local government reform (LGR) in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It support and builds on analysis undertaken to support the submission of an interim plan by the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils to MHCLG in March 2025.

Phase 1 (January - March 2025)

MHCLG officially set out their formal LGR criteria to all councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire on 5th February 2025, with supplementary guidance provided (in response to the interim plan) in June 2025.

Through independent analysis, engagement with Chief Executives and Section 151 officers, an options appraisal for future council arrangements in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire was developed. This has led to the identification of three potential options for LGR (from a long list of eight) which, on agreement with the Leaders / Mayor were included within the interim plan submitted to Government.

Given the rapid timeframe, it was agreed that further work should be undertaken following the interim plan, including a range of activities to deepen the appraisal of the three options.

Phase 2 (May - June 2025)

In considering how each shortlisted option might satisfy the MHCLG criteria, it was agreed in May 2025 that the identified options should be further appraised through additional analysis against the government's framework.

The additional analysis prepared has particularly focussed on:

- **Sensible economic area**
- **Sensible Geography**
- **Impact on crucial services**

Each of the three options offer different strengths and challenges, though Options 1(b) and 1(e) (as set out on page 33) were found to provide the strongest alignment to the set criteria.

The additional analysis undertaken demonstrated that Option 2 is the least aligned, and that the differences in degree of alignment between Options 1(b) and 1(e) are marginal.

This document sets out how each of the three options aligns to the MHCLG criteria and includes updated financial modelling to reflect a review of the assumptions which has been discussed with s151 officers over the course of the last few weeks.

Executive Summary: Updated financial analysis

The financial analysis, methodology and assumptions applied have been shared, tested and talked through with s151 officers. All councils have accepted the financial analysis as complete with each s151 officer providing assurance on the model and underlying assumptions. This analysis is to support the options analysis stage only. Significantly more work will be needed for a financial case that supports a full proposal.

	Transition costs (£)	Annual benefits (£)	Net benefit after five years (£ total)	Payback period (years)
Option 1: 1(b) & 1(e)	£28,848,294	£24,620,878	£64,711,043	1.3
Option 2: Nottinghamshire & Nottingham City	£21,250,744	£24,620,878	£72,308,593	Less than 1 year
Option 3: Single Unitary Authority (Comparative purposes only)	£19,249,433	£30,044,575	£94,919,953	Less than 1 year

The methodology is set out in Appendix B and includes a clarification as to what is and isn't covered for the purposes of an options analysis. There are some considerations for the full financial case that have not been included at this stage including potential impact of the Fair Funding Review 2.0 which is currently in live consultation.

Executive Summary: Process to date

Following the publication of the White Paper, significant activity has taken place in order to agree a local response, to test potential models for reorganisation, to document the outcomes of that analysis, and to present a comprehensive set of information for Chief Executives and Members to consider. The process followed is set out below:

Page 7	**Background & Context**	The potential benefits for councils in the area in both national and local contexts were explored using locally agreed criteria and the criteria provided by MHCLG.
Page 22	**Case for Change**	The case for change examines opportunities to address inefficiencies and disconnections in the current two-tier system and evaluates the potential opportunities that could be driven by local government reform.
Page 27	**Options analysis to March 2025**	The approach undertaken to shortlist options to take forward to implementation. The shortlist was discussed by the Leaders / Mayor of the nine councils.
Page 31	**Options Appraisal post March 2025**	Qualitative assessment of the options were combined with comparative analysis of local economies, geography and deprivation to consider the alignment of options to MHCLG criteria.
Page 63	**Financial Analysis**	A high level financial analysis was undertaken to evaluate the potential benefits, costs and savings associated with creating new unitary authorities.
Page 72	**Implementation**	This section sets out the considerations for implementation and the likely timescales as well as the potential outlining the activities and resources required.

2. Background and Context

2a. National Context

National Context: Devolution and reform

The **English Devolution White Paper** published in late 2024 by MHCLG, outlined a shift in the approach and ambition for reorganising and decentralising power to Local Government in England

The White Paper sets out as the default an enhanced Devolution Framework clarifying the powers available to each type of Authority and the aspiration regarding the types of powers and funding arrangements that will exist in future. This was a distinct shift from previous approaches, built around a bespoke devolution ‘deals’. This new approach seeks to empower local authorities to address existing financial sustainability and local service challenges by:

- Allowing for increased powers to be vested in local and regional government supported by new funding frameworks and integrated funding settlements;
- Structuring these new entities to cover larger geographies, but to retain logical boundaries which avoid ‘islands’ between reorganised areas, and which resonate with local identity;
- Implementing these radical changes at pace, accelerating delivery of benefits.

Reorganisation:
The transition to unitary authorities will ultimately remove the ‘two tier’ model of delivery from the map. This will involve the creation of new unitary councils which take the place of the current county, city and districts.

Devolution:
Creation of Strategic Authorities which will coordinate and commission services at a regional level. This could include the collaboration of multiple unitary authorities to provide a strategic regional authority. The White Paper includes specific ambitions and incentives for these authorities to drive economic growth and lead on strategic planning and transport.

National Context: “*a once in a generation opportunity*”

Government has set out their ambition to make the most of a ‘*once in a generation*’ opportunity to improve the way that local and regional government operated in England. The aim is to create the conditions for economic growth, reduce duplication and fragmentation and create greater efficiencies in public spending and service delivery.

Transform service delivery: LGR should be a catalyst for transformation, beginning with the establishment of new unitary councils. This provides a rare opportunity to redesign ways of working from the ground up and to deliver greater consistency across all services. It also allows for the opportunity to share the best of what is done currently, and to deploy it at scale to support broader public service reform.

Increased efficiency: There is duplication and fragmentation across local government as a result of the way the two-tier system has developed over a number of years. LGR creates an opportunity to address this by consolidating common functions, bringing together services that are currently split across more than one tier, make better use of new and emerging technology and reduce the volume of systems or assets that are currently in place.

Establish a stronger voice for the place: There is an opportunity to develop a stronger, more unified voice for the area which supports its growing presence on the regional and national stage. Government has already expressed its view about the importance of unitary local government as part of the devolution agenda, and in future models of system-wide delivery or integrated funding.

Enhance connections with communities: LGR presents an opportunity to create event better connections with local communities, better understand their sense of belonging, and to design models of service delivery that are effective. A number of the unitary councils established during previous rounds of LGR have adopted similar new arrangements, using the raised profile of democratic accountability to promote and enhance the connection with their communities.

Growth & Prosperity: Continued accelerated growth which reaches all parts of the area requires a strategy that builds on regional priorities and opportunities. The conditions for future prosperity will be influenced by new infrastructure and investment which that require a place-based approach across a wider geography. This is a key priority for regional and local government who will need to work together in different ways to achieve this.

National Context: MHCLG ambitions for local government reform

MHCLG officially set out their formal criteria correspondence to all 21 two-tier areas across England on 5th February 2025.[1] Set out below is a summary of that criteria. The department shared some additional clarifications in June 2025 as part of the response to the interim plan.[2]

Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	Criteria 4	Criteria 5	Criteria 6
Establishing a single tier of government for the whole area	**Improve efficiencies, capacity and withstand financial shocks**	**Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens**	**Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views**	**New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements**	**New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment**
Sensible economic areas, with an appropriate tax base. A sensible geography which will help to increase housing supply and meet local needs. Proposals need to be supported by robust evidence and analysis and include an explanation of the outcomes. There is a need to describe clearly the single tier local government structures it is putting forward for the whole of the area, and explain how, if implemented, these are expected to achieve the outcomes described.	New councils should aim for a population of 500,000 or more. There may be scenarios in which this does not make sense for an area, including on devolution. Efficiencies should be identified to help improve councils' finances and make sure that council taxpayers are getting the best possible value for their money. Proposals should set out how an area will seek to manage transition costs, including planning for future service transformation opportunities from existing budgets.	Proposals should show how new structures will improve local government and service delivery, and should avoid unnecessary fragmentation of services. Opportunities to deliver public service reform should be identified, including where they will lead to better value for money. Consideration should be given to the impacts for crucial services such as social care, children's services, SEND and homelessness, and for wider public services including for public safety.	It is for councils to decide how best to engage locally in a meaningful and constructive way. Proposals should consider issues of local identity and cultural and historic importance. Proposals should include evidence of local engagement, an explanation of the views that have been put forward and how concerns will be addressed.	Proposals will need to consider and set out for areas where there is already a Combined Authority (CA) or a Combined County Authority (CCA) established, how that institution and its governance arrangements will need to change to continue to function effectively; and set out clearly (where applicable) whether this proposal is supported by the CA/CCA /Mayor. Proposals should ensure there are sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority, with timelines that work for both priorities.	Proposals will need to explain plans to make sure that communities are engaged. Where there are already arrangements in place it should be explained how these will enable strong community engagement.

Source: [1] MHCLG Criteria February 2025
[2] MHCLG Criteria June 2025

2b. Local Context

Local Context: Existing two-tier local government

Local government across Nottinghamshire has seen major changes in governance arrangements over time.
In 1992, unitary authorities were created, and by 1998, Nottingham City Council regained full responsibility for local services, while the county continued to operate a two-tier system with District councils.

1888

Creation of Nottinghamshire County Council
The Local Government Act 1888 established Nottinghamshire County Council for rural governance. Nottingham became a county borough.

1894

The Local Government Act
This act created urban and rural district councils, further refining local governance and replacing older parish vestries.

1974

Local Government Reorganisation
This introduced a two-tier system, with Nottinghamshire County Council overseeing strategic services while district and borough council managed local matters.

1998

Nottingham Becomes a Unitary Authority
The City of Nottingham regained unitary authority status, separating from Nottinghamshire County Council and restoring control over key services

2024

East Midlands Combined County Authority
Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils become constituent members of the EMCCA which held its first Mayoral election in May 2024.

2025

Devolution and LGR white paper
The Leaders / Mayor from all nine councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire began reviewing options for local government reform.

Local Context: The ambition to drive public sector reform

In response to the White Paper shared on 16th December 2024, and in advance of the statutory invitation being received from MHCLG, the nine councils agreed a series of local priorities which are set out below:

How people live their lives

- Covers a credible geography – reflecting how places function economically and how people live their lives
- Reflects community identity and makes sense as a "Place" including spatial characteristics
- Enables sustainable operational delivery for public services
- Seeks to improve connectivity especially for communities that most need support

Financial and fiscal sustainability

- Financially sustainable local authorities, which are resilient to longer-term economic or policy changes by balancing income and need
- Delivers value for money through economy, efficiency and effectiveness
- Delivers financial benefits which outweigh the cost of change
- Risk informed with effective mitigation measures
- Considers the future Council Tax base and equalisation across new authority areas

Offers the potential for public service reform that improves outcomes and experiences for residents

- Enables solutions to challenges impacting on residents' outcomes and which risk long-term financial stability
- Provides safe and resilient support, help and protection and care to vulnerable children, families and adults
- Aligns with EMCCA to enable creation and delivery of services for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire
- Considers alignment with all other key strategic partners
- Maximises opportunity to enhance delivery through innovation

Enables strong, local accountability and connection to communities and neighbourhoods

- Ensures services are easily accessible for all
- Strengthens the role of local democratic leadership
- Builds trust with local communities
- Seeks the active input and engagement of residents, businesses and employees

Local Context: East Midlands Combined County Authority

The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) has a strategic purpose to address economic, planning and infrastructure needs at a regional level. Further devolution deals under the proposed strategic authority framework will provide a means to unlocking additional central government (integrated) funding arrangements and greater powers with delivery responsibilities sitting with new unitary authorities.

EMCCA's Background

The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) was officially established on 28th February 2024.

The EMCCA is a partnership of local authorities working across the region to leverage devolved funding.
An elected Mayor and board with decision-making powers is in place. This creates the conditions for greater local autonomy and will over time gain further strategic powers and devolved central government funding.

What constitutes the EMCCA?

In November 2022, a devolution deal was agreed by the four upper-tier councils:

- Derbyshire County Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Derby City Council
- Nottingham City Council

This secured a £1.1bn investment package, spread over a 30-year period, alongside devolved powers around transport, housing, skills and adult education, economic development and net zero.

EMCCA's Priorities

EMCCA's shared ambition for the region focuses on:

- Growing the region's economy through targeting investment to drive growth
- Improving transport links for better connectivity
- Increasing housing availability
- Enhancing skills development to create demand and supply within the region
- Supporting green initiatives
- Improving health outcomes

East Midlands Combined County Authority

Local Context: Role of EMCCA and new unitary authorities

Determining how the new councils will work with EMCCA will form part of the full business case. Several factors should be considered when defining this relationship including MHCLG criteria, existing and future aims and objectives and community expectations of each body as well as the opportunity for wider public service reform.

The role that unitary authorities will play in service delivery, within the context of the newly created EMCCA, will need to be agreed during implementation. Initial factors for considerations are outlined below:

(1) Criteria: ***What does 'one layer of local government for the whole area' imply?***

MHCLG Criteria 1 requires proposals to achieve the establishment of a single tier of local government. For Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, EMCCA will set the strategic direction, and the new councils will have an operational focus.

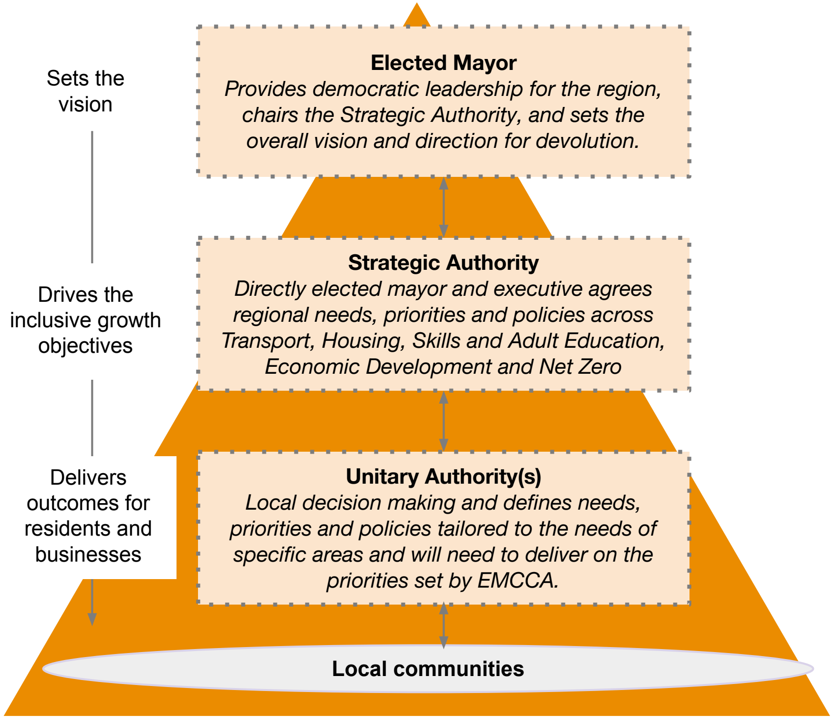
(2) Purpose: ***What are the aims and objectives of each body?***

EMCCA has powers relating to transport, housing and skills – alongside leading the economic strategy of the region. Several key aims have been identified within the EMCCA Strategic Framework that sets out an initial broad vision rooted in 'inclusive growth'. The Strategic Authority will set the growth agenda and lead decisions on the direction of spatial planning, transport and skills provision.

This will be overseen by the EMCCA Inclusive Growth Commission, which sets out the view that growth is essential to creating successful communities that are people-centred and focus on education, wellbeing, public safety, healthcare, infrastructure, housing and assets.

(3) Community: ***What would a resident expected of each body?***

Residents will expect councils to continue providing vital services to their community and championing their towns, rural communities and cities, whilst EMCCA will be expected to deliver transport links, business development and employment opportunities that support places and inclusive growth.



Local Context: Geography, population and council spend

Set out below and across the next four pages is a snapshot of the context in which all nine councils are operating which has fed into the comparative analysis undertaken, aligned to local and MHCLG criteria.

Nottinghamshire is currently served by multiple tiers of local governance. Nottinghamshire County Council is responsible for education, social care and highways, while seven district and borough councils provide services such as housing, waste collection and local planning. Nottingham City Council operates as a unitary authority, distinct from Nottinghamshire County Council, managing all local government functions within its boundaries.

The county is represented by 11 parliamentary constituencies, many of which closely align with district and borough boundaries.

Nottinghamshire shares a boundary with several neighbouring counties: Derbyshire to the west, South Yorkshire to the north, Lincolnshire to the east and Leicestershire to the south. EMCCA is comprised of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and the cities of Nottingham and Derby.

Nottinghamshire County

Population: 844,494
Total annual net spend: £1.2bn

Bassetlaw

Population: 122,286
Total annual net spend: £21.2m

Mansfield

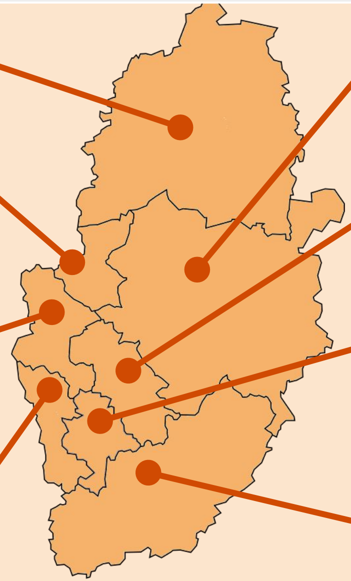
Population: 112,091
Total annual net spend: £15.2m

Ashfield

Population: 128,360
Total annual net spend: £22.0m

Broxtowe

Population: 113,172
Total annual net spend: £14.7m



Newark and Sherwood

Population: 126,168
Total annual net spend: £22.6m

Gedling

Population: 118,563
Total annual net spend: £15.6m

Nottingham City

Population: 329,276
Total annual net spend: £632.9m

Rushcliffe

Population: 123,854
Total annual net spend: £16.8m

Sources:
[1] ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales Mid- 2023: local authority boundary edition
[2] Nottinghamshire County Council revenue budget statement FY24/25

Local Context: Place & Demography

Nottinghamshire has a diverse socio-economic profile, with place and demographic trends indicating contrasts between urban and rural areas as well as across those places which are historically industrial compared to those which are experiencing growth in new sectors. It is important that any reorganisation considers the diverse place and demography across the wider area.

19.0% of the Nottinghamshire population is aged over 65, and is projected to rise by over 30.0% by 2034. Bassetlaw has the highest proportion of over 65's, while Nottingham City has the lowest.

Gross disposable income is highest in Rushcliffe, at £23,828, and lowest in Nottingham City, at £15,015. This compares to a national average of £20,425.

Bassetlaw has the lowest population density within the area at 110 people per square km. Nottingham City is the most densely populated as 4,338 people per square km.

The further education and skills participation is highest in Nottingham City, at 6,545 per 100,000 population, and lowest in Rushcliffe, at 4,435 per 100,000 population.

Ethnic diversity varies, with Nottingham city the most diverse (65.9% white; 14.9% Asian, Asian British or Welsh; 10.0% Black, Black British or Welsh, Caribbean or African) and Bassetlaw the least.

Nottingham City has the highest proportion of its population claiming out of work benefits, 6.3%, and Rushcliffe the lowest at 2.1%.

Nottingham City is facing economic challenges as a result of growth constraints, whilst northern districts are more deprived and some districts such as Rushcliffe have older populations overall.

Sources:
[1] ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales Mid- 2023: local authority boundary edition
[2] ONS Census: Gross disposable household income (2021)
[3] Nomis Population Density (2021)
[4] ONS Census 2021: Further Education and skills participation
[5] ONS Census Ethnic group, England and Wales
[6] ONS Claimant Count (2024)

Local Context: Economic Geography

Latest data on Gross Value Added (GVA) demonstrates strong ties in the manufacturing and wholesale / retail trade sectors, with at least one of these sectors being a significant part of each district's economy. Any new unitary authorities will need to carefully consider the sectors it intends to nurture, the type of inward investment it will seek and what type of economy would be created as a result. EMCCA clearly has a significant leadership role in this.

Local Authority City / District	Largest in GVA terms (2022)		2nd largest in GVA terms (2022)		3rd largest in GVA terms (2022)	
	Sector	%	Sector	%	Sector	%
Ashfield	Manufacturing	19.4%	Human health and social work activities	18.5%	Construction	13.6%
Bassetlaw	Manufacturing	20.8%	Wholesale and retail trade	12.3%	Human health and social work activities	11.1%
Broxtowe	Manufacturing	24.2%	Real estate activities	12.7%	Wholesale and retail trade	11.8%
Gedling	Real estate activities	18.2%	Manufacturing	15.7%	Wholesale and retail trade	14.9%
Mansfield	Wholesale and retail trade	16.8%	Real estate activities	11.6%	Manufacturing	11.6%
Newark & Sherwood	Manufacturing	12.6%	Real estate activities	11.4%	Information and communication	9.9%
Nottingham	Education	13.7%	Human health and social work activities	12.4%	Wholesale and retail trade	11.8%
Rushcliffe	Professional, scientific and technical activities	22.9%	Real estate activities	13.3%	Wholesale and retail trade	10.7%

Sources:
[1] ONS - Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: local authorities by ITL1 region

Local Context: Transport and Connectivity

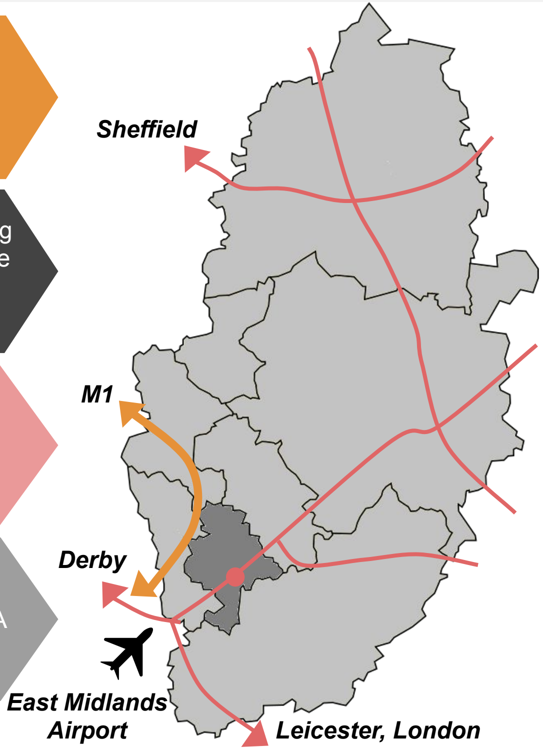
Nottinghamshire's transport network is designed to support economic hubs and growing commuter flows. Greater investment is required to enhance connectivity and mobility. It is important that any reorganisation efforts consider the existing transport and infrastructure arrangements.

Transport data reveals significant commuting patterns, particularly the dominance of Nottingham as a key employment hub, attracting 73% of workers from within the city, 42% from Gedling and 35% from Rushcliffe. Mansfield and Newark and Sherwood are also major employment centers, with 55% of Mansfield's workforce living locally and 59% of Newark and Sherwoods' workforce employed within the area. However, smaller employment flows exist across districts, demonstrating localised economies with some regional mobility.

Transport infrastructure supports current movements, with the M1, A1, and major rail links providing connectivity. Though transport is challenging in rural areas where one-third of the population resides. Increasing vehicle use is evident, with Nottinghamshire's road traffic rising from 3.9bn miles in 2020 to 4.8bn in 2023, while Nottingham's traffic grew from 885m miles to 1.1bn miles in the same period. Strategic planning for transport and services after LGR will be crucial to maintaining connectivity and overall will be the responsibility of EMCCA.

Nottingham City Council has secured over £250m since 2019 to enhance its transport network. Key programmes include Transforming Cities for better connectivity, the Bus Service Improvement Plan for greener buses, Future Transport Zones for innovative mobility, the Levelling Up Fund for safer streets, and the Active Travel Fund to promote walking and cycling. These support the city's long-term transport vision.

In the context of LGR, transport planning must remain coordinated and efficient to support economic connectivity and service integration. Many transport projects, such as Transforming Cities and the Bus Service Improvement Plan, are currently delivered in partnership between Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Councils. A shift to two unitaries, for example, would require a strategy to avoid duplication, ensure efficiency, and coordinate investment across the area. EMCCA will have a leadership role in this as the Strategic Authority.



Sources:
[1] Nottinghamshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026

Local Context: Strategic Partnerships

Strong partnerships exist across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire which provide the basis to drive better outcomes and wider public sector reform. The majority operate within coterminous boundaries. Some examples of these are set out below.

Regional Government

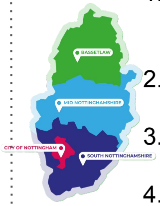
The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) was officially established on 28th February 2024, with the Mayor elected in May 2024.

Initial devolved funding arrangements and powers are in place governed by an elected Mayor and board with decision-making powers. There is an opportunity for EMCCA to become a strategic authority under the arrangements set out in the White Paper.

Health Partners

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System (ICS): This partnership brings together the wider system to commission and deliver integrated health and care services, including primary care across the whole Nottingham and Nottinghamshire area.

Within Nottinghamshire, there are four Place Based Partnerships (PBPs):



1. Bassetlaw Place Based Partnership *(also part of South Yorkshire ICS)*
2. Mid Nottinghamshire Place Based Partnership
3. South Nottinghamshire Place Based Partnership
4. Nottingham City Place Based Partnership

Private Sector & VCSE

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Alliance: Established in July 2022, this alliance comprises VCSE organisations across the region, acting as a single point of contact to generate citizen intelligence from the communities they serve. The alliance collaborates with statutory partners to improve outcomes for residents.

Since 2016, Arc Partnership - a joint venture between Nottinghamshire County Council and SCAPE - has delivered 3,511 community projects and secured £394m in investment. It provides property design, consultancy, regeneration, and asset management services.

Community Safety

There are a range of community safety partnerships across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs): County/City Councils are required to participate in CSPs, which involve collaboration with police, fire services, health services, and other agencies to develop strategies for reducing crime and improving community safety e.g. the Nottingham Community Safety Partnership. Also, in two-tier areas there is a statutory requirement to have a strategic county coordinating group, the Safer Nottinghamshire Board (SNB).

Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire has one police force, which is split into 12 smaller neighbourhood policing areas, allowing local officers to work closely with communities.

3. Case for Change

Case For Change: Opportunities

Local government reform in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire presents an opportunity to address inefficiencies in the current two-tier system, which creates duplication, administrative complexity, and inconsistent service delivery.

Opportunities

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have already embarked on a journey to devolution as part of EMCCA and LGR offers an opportunity to underpin this with a local structure that supports and complements the regional authority. A new unitary authority which encompasses an expanded city area would create space to grow, in turn providing opportunity to align urban planning and services. For example, with 6,565 additional homes required in Nottingham City over the forecast period 2022/27, reorganisation may enhance housing provision by balancing resources across a larger geographical area and tax base.

A simplified governance model would consolidate local service delivery under two new unitary authorities. This approach can enhance efficiency and consistency across a wider geography and community, ensuring seamless, equitable and cost-effective provision of key services. It also provides clarity for residents on where responsibilities for delivery of local services lies, and the respective layers of democratic representation.

Building on the Progress of EMCCA

1 Strengthening Regional Governance

LGR can help ensure that local councils work more efficiently with EMCCA, avoiding fragmented governance and complex decision-making processes.

2 Attracting More Investment

EMCCA can unlock significant funding and access to regional and national investment, while a streamlined local government structure simplifies bidding and fund management and delivery once funding is secured.

3 Supporting Economic Growth

Aligning LGR choices with the regional strategy and economic vision by simplifying the two-tier system decision-making and implementation.

4 Enhancing Democratic Accountability

LGR creates clearer governance, strengthening local authority ties with EMCCA and ensuring transparent, accountable decision-making for residents and businesses.

Case For Change: Limitations in the current system

Rising financial pressures on local councils highlight the urgent need for governance reform, with unitary authorities bringing together services with opportunities for future transformation, offering a pathway to improved stability, efficiency, and accountability.

Limitations

The current two-tier system can be confusing for residents and businesses regarding the responsibility for service provision (*see page 25*), and creates considerable customer demand in redirecting and supporting enquiries. Multiple district councils increases the challenge of coordination, and while collaboration across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is generally productive and positive, delivering complex services such as housing, planning and economic growth is more challenging across multiple organisations. The recent reliance on bidding processes for central government funding places local areas in a competitive rather than collaborative space, resulting in potential gaps in service delivery, or in unequal provision of support across the area.

There are wider partnership challenges as the number of organisations that need to be involved in decision-making processes or operational delivery is significant. This is a system-wide issue and not just limited to local government arrangements.

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Escalating challenges in Financial Stability

Nottingham City Council is under a Best Value Intervention Framework review due to financial challenges. To comply with the Best Value Duty, it developed a framework within its ‘Together for Nottingham’ plan, aimed at improving service delivery and meeting statutory obligations. Rising demand for key services, particularly adult social care, alongside economic pressures has intensified financial strain. In 2024/25, the council required £41.0m in Exceptional Financial Support to balance its budget. To address ongoing challenges, it proposed £17.9m in savings and income measures for 2025/26, focusing on financial stability while maintaining essential services.

Projections at the time of this analysis indicated a budget pressure of £27m in 2024/25 for Nottinghamshire County Council, with more significant pressures identified in subsequent years. To address financial challenges, the council has proposed various service efficiencies aimed at maintaining value for money while delivering its priorities.

There is also a live consultation on Fair Funding 2.0 which is likely to result in changes in funding levels for all councils in the area.

Case For Change: Services

The existing two-tier system has the potential to lead to service duplication. Local Government Reform offers a chance to simplify services, optimise resources, and enhance outcomes for residents. The types of local authorities and the services provided by each district are outlined below.

Type	Name	Community Safety & Trading Standards	Economic Develop-ment	Education & Schools	Highways Roads & Transport	Housing	Licencing & Public Protection	Parks, Leisure & Culture	Planning & Building Control	Public Health	Social care	Waste disposal / recycling	Waste Collection
Unitary Authority	Nottingham City	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County Council	Nottinghamshire County	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	*	✓	✓	✓	
District Authority	Ashfield	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Bassetlaw	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Broxtowe	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Gedling	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Mansfield	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Newark & Sherwood	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Rushcliffe	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓

* Nottinghamshire County Council provides planning and building services in the form of Strategic Planning

Case For Change: Democracy

Democratic services across Nottinghamshire, the city and districts manage a significant amount of electoral services activity, including rolling registration, election administration and supporting committees of their respective councils. Unitary councils would result in one set of local elections per authority (as currently take place in Nottingham City):

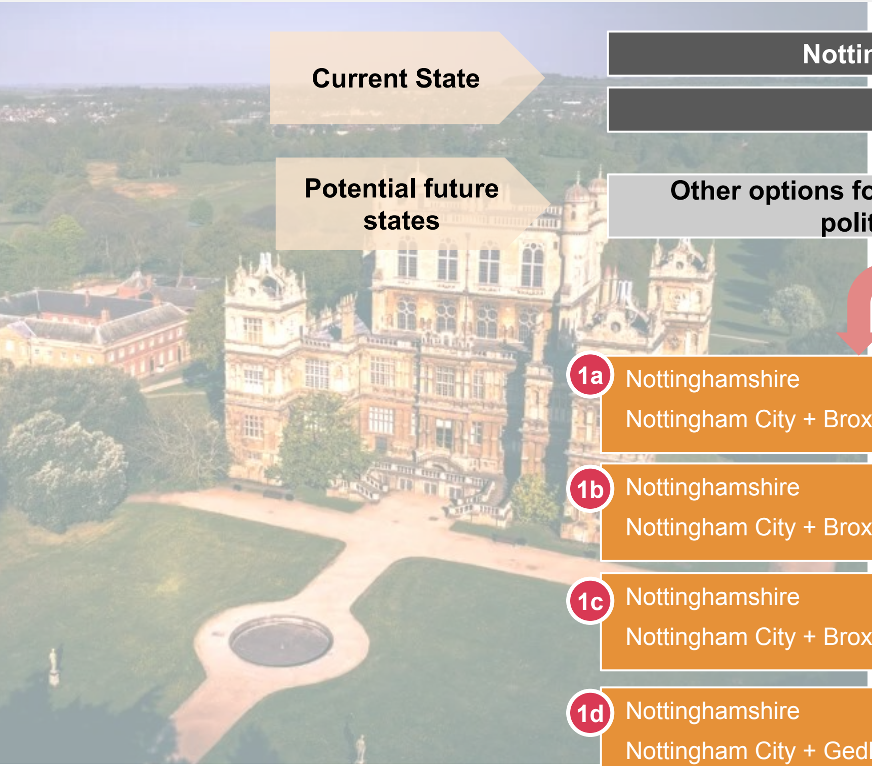
Local Election	Number of Councillors[3]	Election Cycle[3]	Last Election[1]	Votes Cast[1]	Number of electors per council member[3]
Nottinghamshire County Council	66	4 years	2025[2]	287,388[2]	9,404[4]
Nottingham City UA	55	4 years	2023	55,879	3,633
Ashfield	35	4 years	2023	29,594	2,662
Bassetlaw	48	4 years	2023	27,738	1,868
Broxtowe	44	4 years	2023	42,154	1,922
Gedling	41	4 years	2023	31,259	2,185
Mansfield	36	4 years	2023	22,191	2,266
Newark & Sherwood	39	4 years	2023	27,844	2,371
Rushcliffe	44	4 years	2023	39,926	2,095

Sources:
[1] Electoral statistics for the UK 2023; [2] Sum total of votes casted (2025)
[3] Various Sources (2021-2025); [4] The Local Government boundary commission

4. Options analysis to March 2025

Summary of Options: Overview

A number of two unitary authority options were identified to be part of the initial options appraisal activity taking into account the MHCLG framework and local criteria.



Current State

- **Nottinghamshire County Council**
- **District Councils**
- **Nottingham City Council**

Potential future states

- **Other options for change discounted for political reasons**
- **Two Unitary Authorities**

Multiple remaining options

1a	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe
1b	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling
1c	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Broxtowe
1d	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Gedling
1e	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe
1f	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Rushcliffe
1g	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Gedling + Rushcliffe
2	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City

Methodology and Approach: Overview

The process for appraising the initial eight options and distilling to a shortlist of three is set out below. The detail of each of the four lenses of the comparative analysis is set out on the following page.

1

Longlist of options

An overview of all the potential options for LGR will be initially outlined.

Multiple unitary options covering different geographies

2

Option Distillation Approach

- Collective engagement with CEX, Leaders & Mayors
- Individual engagement with each CEX and respective Leader / Mayor
- Individual engagement with Senior Officers
- Assessment of fit to local & MHCLG criteria

Comparative Analysis

- Lens **A** – Geographic Synergy
- Lens **B** – Financial Viability
- Lens **C** – Comparative Analysis
- Lens **D** – LGR Benefits & Costs

3

Shortlist of options

At this stage, a preliminary shortlist of options to take forward for implementation will be outlined.

- Option
- Option
- Option

Comparative Analysis: Overview

Each option was analyses through a series of 'lenses' the detail of which is set out below. The summary of the comparative analysis can be found at Appendix C.

Lens
A
Geographic Synergy

Geographic Analysis

Analysis of publicly available data to understand the geographic synergy of the two unitary authority options. This will include an understanding of each District's proportion of rural and urban populations, each Authorities Mosaic Segmentation Profiles and the average time to key services.

Lens
B
Financial Viability

Analysis of financial data from individual councils

Analysis of publicly available information to understand the financial viability of two unitary authority options. This will include understanding existing positions on debt to reserve ratios, and measure both current and future Council Tax take in relation to demand for both Adult and Children Social Care.

Lens
C
Comparative Analysis

Other relevant information

Analysis of other relevant data points in line with the criteria such as population, deprivation and housing to identify which options are likely to result in the establishment of two councils that are broadly balanced.

Lens
D
LGR Benefits & Costs

Outcomes of financial modelling

Our financial analysis will be used to assess the benefits and costs of your local government transformation, demonstrating the benefits, costs and savings related to the implementation of a two unitary authority system.

5. Options analysis post March 2025

Summary of Options: Options to take forward (1/2)

As set out in the previous section, the first phase of options analysis distilled eight options to three which were included in the interim plan submitted to Government in March.

Current State

Nottinghamshire County Council

District Councils

Nottingham City Council

Potential future states

Other options for change discounted for political reasons

Two Unitary Authorities

Multiple remaining options

1a
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe

1b
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling

1c
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe

1d
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Gedling

1e
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe

1f
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Rushcliffe

1g
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Gedling + Rushcliffe

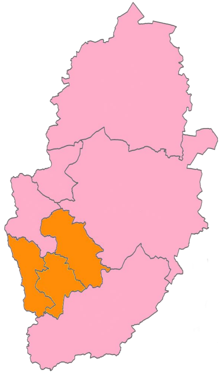
2
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City

Key: Proceed to Interim Plan

Summary of Options: Options to take forward (2/2)

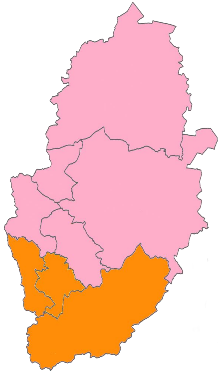
The three options set out in the interim plan are described below.

1b
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling



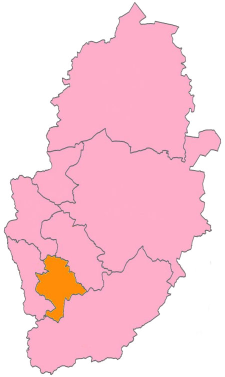
1. Nottingham City conurbation to include **Broxtowe and Gedling**
2. The **rest of Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority

1e
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe



1. Nottingham City conurbation to include **Broxtowe and Rushcliffe**
2. The **rest of Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority

2
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City



1. **Nottingham City remains the same**
2. The **rest of the Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of shortlisted options (1/3)

In considering how each shortlisted option might satisfy the MHCLG criteria, it was agreed that further analysis should be undertaken by the nine councils to enable Chief Executives and Members to take a decision on which option(s) to take forward to develop into a full business case for local government reorganisation.

Each option demonstrates varying degrees of alignment with the MHCLG criteria and presents distinct strengths and risks. Key factors that have been considered include financial sustainability, service coordination, and sensible geographic and economic configurations.

Assessment against MHCLG Criteria + **Domain Analysis**

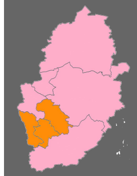
- 01 Sensible single tier of local government
- 02 'Right-sized' local local government
- 03 High quality, sustainable services
- 04 Meets local needs
- 05 Supports devolution arrangements
- 06 Local engagement and empowerment

Domain Analysis:

- 1(b) Sensible economic breakdown
- 1(c) Sensible geographic breakdown
- 3(a) Improves local government & service delivery
- 3(b) Opportunity for public service reform
- 3(C) Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk on crucial services

Relative alignment of LGR criteria among options:

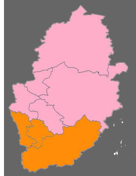
High alignment · Medium alignment · Low alignment



Option 1(b)
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling

This option demonstrates a somewhat stronger fit against the MHCLG criteria compared to other options. Whilst constraints such as urban capacity and Green Belt review may impact future housing delivery, it combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings and aligns with the City's demography and geography, potentially creating a more even requirement for service delivery and equal population / debt-to-reserve ratio based on analysis.

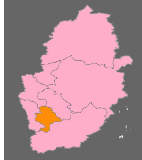
01 02 03 04 05 06



Option 1(e)
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe

This option demonstrates a strong fit against the MHCLG criteria. It is a marginally stronger fit on travel to work and housing market areas, has a balanced population split, similar deprivation levels, (to 1b) and is comparable in terms of the financial analysis completed to date. The city-based conurbation authority would become predominantly rural with the more diverse Mosaic characteristics, potentially leading to a requirement of different services models across the place.

01 02 03 04 05 06



Option 2
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City

This option demonstrates the weakest alignment against the MHCLG criteria of the three options under further consideration. It would provides the greatest degree of fragmentation of travel to work, hospital and housing market areas, a significant population and debt-to-reserve imbalance which is the highest amongst all options, significant challenges in coordinating and financing services, and may leave communities that identify with the city in a different geography.

01 02 03 04 05 06

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of shortlisted options (2/3)

Additional analysis was completed focussed on key MHCLG criteria including 1(b), 1(c) and 3 as highlighted below. This and previous analysis completed has helped inform the evaluation of each option against all MHCLG criteria.

Criteria	Key factors	Option 1b	Option 1e	Option 2
1 Sensible single tier of local government	*Establishes a single tier of Local Government for the whole of the area concerned* *Sensible economic breakdown: with a tax base which does not create undue inequalities* *Sensible geographic breakdown: which will help increase housing supply and meet local needs*	Medium	High	Low
2 'Right-sized' local government	*A population of 500,000 or more (unless specific scenarios make this unreasonable)* *Supports efficiencies and value for money for council taxpayers* *Improves capacity and supports the council to withstand financial shocks* *Manageable transition costs*	High	High	Low
3 High quality, sustainable services	*Improves local government & service delivery, avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation* *Opportunity for public service reform including where this will lead to improved value for money* *Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk to negative impact on crucial services*	High	Medium	Medium
4 Meets local needs	*Meets local needs and is informed by local views* *Improves / mitigates risk to issues of local identity, cultural and historic importance* *Addresses local concerns*	High	Medium	Medium
5 Supports devolution arrangements	*Helps to support devolution arrangements / unlock devolution* *Sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority*	High	High	Low
6 Local engagement and empowerment	*Enables stronger community engagement* *Delivers genuine opportunities for neighbourhood empowerment*	Medium	Medium	Medium

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of shortlisted options (3/3)

Each LGR model offers different strengths and challenges, though Options 1(b) and (e) would provide the strongest alignment to the MHCLG criteria. Whilst the analysis concludes that Option 2 is the least appropriate option, it also sets out that the differences between Options 1(b) and 1(e) are marginal.

Summary of domain analysis

Sensible Economic Area (SEA) (1a)
The differences in degree of fit are marginal. Option 1(e) (< 1 percent) provides a slightly stronger fit with the Travel to Work Area (TTWA) and the Housing Market Area (HMA) but also will have the complication of housing delivery for the urban conurbation being delivered across two authorities.

Sensible Geography (1b)
Option 1(b) may not accelerate housing supply in the same way that Option 1(e) might, with 1(e) producing two more balanced authorities in size with a wide mix of housing supply sources and reflects existing joint workings on GNSP.

Critical Services (3)
Option 1(b) is overall the preferred choice due to its demographic and geographic similarities. Additionally, it provides a relatively balanced distribution of demand of crucial services.

Criteria	1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
1 *Sensible single tier of local government*	*Strong alignment with SEA criteria but fragments travel to work/housing areas; urban capacity constraints and green belt review could impact future growth beyond current plan* (M)	*Stronger alignment with SEA criteria marginally more than Option 1(b) (<1 percent); wide mix of housing supply resources but supply will be require cross council collaboration.* (H)	*Greatest fragmentation of travel to work and housing market areas and weakest alignment to sensible geography; supply figures look strong through difficult to increase supply in long-term (no green-belt)* (L)
2 *'Right-sized' local government*	*Equal population level (603k vs 661k) though an imbalance in debt-to-reserves ratio (53.5 vs 16.6); financial resilience likely to be met despite imbalance and only marginally less balanced than Option 1(e)* (H)	*Equal population level (611k vs 653k) though an imbalance in debt-to-reserve ratio (47.1 vs 17.5); though is the option with the lowest difference on this factor between authorities* (H)	*Significant population imbalance and highest amongst all options (352k vs 912k); financial resilience a concern as debt-to-reserve reaction significantly unbalanced (83.9 vs 16.5)* (L)
3 *High quality, sustainable services*	*Provides a balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND; has the best demographic and geographic makeup for service delivery.* (H)	*Provides a relatively balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness and ASC; there are challenges around SEND as Rushcliffe has a lower demand with varying geography and demography.* (M)	*It creates unitaries with an uneven distribution of services; The demand for homelessness, ASC and SEND is the most varying under this option.* (M)
4 *Meets local needs*	*Combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings and most similar clustering of Mosaic segments across both authorities; able to tailor services to specific demographics* (H)	*Combines authorities that are most different in terms of rural / urban settings, with the city-based conurbation authority becoming predominantly rural; difficult to tailor services to specific demographics* (M)	*Combines authorities that are highly alike in terms of rural / urban setting; arguably less likely to satisfy criteria as may leave communities that do identify with the city in a different and rural geography* (M)
5 *Supports devolution arrangements*	*Combined authority already exists within the Nottingham City conurbation and meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (603k for Nottingham City and 661k for Nottinghamshire by 2035)* (H)	*Combined authority already exists within the Nottingham City conurbation and meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (611k for Nottingham City and 653k for Nottinghamshire by 2035)* (H)	*Combined authority already exists though does not meet requirements for a sensible population (352k for Nottingham City and 912k for Nottinghamshire by 2035) and minimum threshold of 500k population* (L)
6 *Local engagement & empowerment*	*Similar clustering of Mosaic segments and some overlap with Hospital Trusts and Nottingham City Council boundaries though not completely coterminous; new channels required to engage communities* (M)	*Existing efforts to prepare GNSP demonstrates joint engagement and some overlap with Hospital Trusts though not completely coterminous; mix of rural/urban communities requires bespoke channels* (M)	*Consolidation of rural communities allows for concentrated focus on specific community issues; size of rural / mixed urban unitary could make it challenging to maintain depth of local engagement* (M)

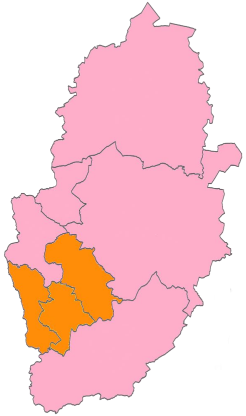
Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

Alignment to MHCLG criteria: H M L

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of Option 1(b)

This option demonstrates the strongest fit against the MHCLG criteria overall. Whilst constraints such as urban capacity and Green Belt review may impact future housing delivery, it combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings amongst all options and aligns with the City's demography and geography, offering a balanced distribution of service delivery, equal population and debt-to-reserve ratio.

1b **Two Unitary Authorities:**
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling



Alignment to MHCLG criteria

H M L

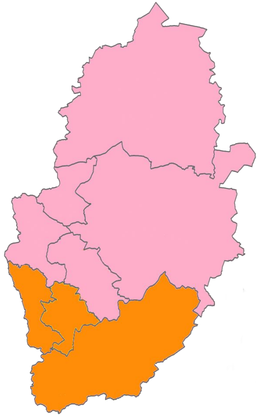
Criteria	Advantages and Disadvantages (Key: Footnote (Page))
Criteria 1	Presents a stronger alignment with the Sensible Economic Area criteria than Option 2 though is not an optimum fit as fragments both the travel to work and housing market areas in Nottingham; though only marginally more more than Option 1(e) (< 1 percent).[1] (22) Similarly, it presents a stronger alignment with the Sensible Geography criteria than Option 2, though less than Option 1(e).[2] (22) Whilst Option 1(b) has the lowest difference between the two authorities in the number of homes needed and available over next 15yrs,[2] (12) constraints such as urban capacity, Green Belt review and splitting of strategic growth areas would dominate and impact future growth options beyond current plan allocations, and may hinder long-term housing supply.[2] (20) Deprivation levels are relatively equal though the spread between authorities is wider in Option 1(b) than 1(e), with Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling average deprivation score at 26.5, and the rest of Nottinghamshire's at 20.7.[9]
Criteria 2	Presents an equal population level though marginally less than Option 1(e), with Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling projected to have 603,185 residents by 2035 and the rest of Nottinghamshire would have 661,460.[7] Additionally, financial resilience - key to criteria 2 - is likely to be met with this option, as Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling debt-to-reserves ratio stands at 53.5, with the Nottinghamshire authority standing at 14.0.[8] Despite an imbalance in debt/reserves per capita, this option is only marginally less balanced than Option 1(e).
Criteria 3	Strongest fit with Criteria 3 given the similar demographics and geography between Broxtowe, Gedling and Nottingham City meaning minimal impact to service delivery given infrastructure, town centres, travel and crossover to facilitates. Ensures a balanced distribution of demand for SEND services, minimising impact on resources, workforce and caseload.[3] (8,11) Additionally, this option offers the most equitable share of Children's Social Care Expenditure (51% & 49% for the County and City authority respectively).[12] (8) It also has potential to deliver ASC services to areas with greater commonality of needs.[4] (9) Potential risks of Option 1(b) include potential fragmentation of homelessness services given confused pathways and weaker relationships between health and housing/homeless teams/services 10 (14) and possible impact on provider services due to asset relocation.[4] (10)
Criteria 4	This option presents the strongest alignment with criteria 4 when considering local identity. Looking at the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography, Option 1(b) combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings of all three options (i.e. Urban Minor Conurbation and Rural Town/Fringe).[5] It also has the most similar clustering of demographics across both Unitary Authorities when considering mosaic characteristics, which are mainly Aspiring Homemakers, Senior Security, Rental Hubs, Domestic Success and Rental Hubs (non-exhaustive).[6] Given the similar grouping of rural and urban populations, this suggests that each authority could best tailor its services to the specific needs of its demographic.[5]
Criteria 5	This option presents a strong alignment with criteria 5. It supports effective governance arrangements with the two new Unitary Authorities and the EMCCA as the reorganisation will reduce complexity and bureaucracy. Additionally, this option meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (outlined above in Criteria 2), with the Nottingham City conurbation projected to have 603,185 residents by 2035 and the rest of Nottinghamshire to have 661,460.[7]
Criteria 6	There is some overlap with existing wider system provision and several cross-boundary community networks already operating across this geography, though there would be a need to consider if new channels / approaches will be required to strengthen engagement with communities. Gedling, Broxtowe and Nottingham residents also share similar urban characteristics, challenges, and infrastructure needs - enabling more targeted and aligned engagement approaches.[6]

1. Criteria Assessment: Sensible Economic Areas for LGR in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
2. Criteria Assessment: Increasing Housing Supply and Meeting Local Needs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
3. Criteria Assessment: Children's SEND service in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
4. Criteria Assessment: Adult Social Care services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
5. Comparative Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (Phase 1)
6. Comparative Analysis: Experian Mosaic segmentation analysis (Phase 1)
7. Comparative Analysis: Population (Phase 1)
8. Comparative Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis (Phase 1)
9. Comparative Analysis: Deprivation (Phase 1)
10. Criteria Assessment: Homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
11. Criteria Assessment: Public Safety in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
12. Criteria Assessment in Children's Social Care in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of Option 1(e)

This option demonstrates a strong fit against the MHCLG criteria with a marginally stronger fit with travel to work and housing market areas than Option 1(b). Whilst there is a balanced population split, similar deprivation levels, and similar levels financial resilience, the city-based conurbation authority would become predominantly rural with the least similar Mosaic characteristics, potentially needing different service delivery models and a potential imbalance in terms of demand.

1e Two Unitary Authorities: Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe



Alignment to MHCLG criteria

H M L

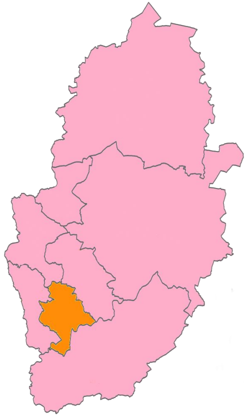
Criteria	Advantages and Disadvantages (Key: Footnote (Page))
Criteria 1	Stronger alignment with the Sensible Economic Area criteria, providing the strongest fit with travel to work areas, housing market areas and NHS hospital trust areas, though only marginally more than Option 1(b) (< 1 percent).[11 (23)] Similarly, it presents the strongest alignment with the Sensible Geography criteria overall,[2 (22)] despite having the greatest difference between the two authorities in the number of homes needed and available over next 15yrs.[2 (15)] This is due to existing collaborations on the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan and the ability to release Nottingham Derby Green Belt land as Grey Belt to address the housing needed, producing two balanced planning authorities in size with wide mix of housing supply resources. Deprivation levels are relatively equal between the two authorities and is the option with the lowest difference, with Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe average deprivation score at 24.7, and the rest of Nottinghamshire's at 22.3.[9]
Criteria 2	Presents an equal population level and is the option with the lowest difference between authorities, with the city authority projected to have 611,518 residents by 2035 and Nottinghamshire having 653,127.[7] Additionally, financial resilience- is likely to be met, as Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe debt-to-reserves ratio stands at 47.4, and the rest of Nottinghamshire's 17.5. Despite an imbalance in debt/reserves per capita, it is the option with the lowest difference between authorities.[8]
Criteria 3	Demographics and geography differ in the city authority, with Rushcliffe being more similar to Bassetlaw and Newark with large rural areas and an older adult populations.[4 (17)] Whilst no noticeable service enhancement opportunities have been identified for ASC[4 (12)] or SEND, this option may help streamline homelessness services as rough sleepers have a local connection to Notts City.[10 (15)] For Children's Social Care, Option 1(e) would provide a fairer share of the tax base across the two new unitarties.[12 (9)] However, whilst the disaggregation of Rushcliffe from the county to city authority would have little impact in terms of demand (i.e. children in care), income would be significantly reduced for the county authority. The percentage point gap of 6% between the share of children's total expenditure is 3 times that of Option 1(b).[12 (9)] The key risk to service delivery is further exemplified through the loss of revenue for SEND service in Rushcliffe, as it has a lower rate of children with EHCPs or special provisions which would result in an imbalance between service demand and income needed.[3 (9)]
Criteria 4	This option presents a medium alignment with criteria 4. Looking at the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography, Option 1(e) combines authorities that are the most different in terms of rural / urban settings.[5] The city-based conurbation authority would become predominantly rural, whilst the county-based authority would remain predominantly rural.[1 (23)] Of all three options, it also has the least similar Mosaic characteristics across both authorities.[6] Given that Option 1(e) would combine authorities that are most different in terms of rural and urban populations, this suggests that each authority might not be able to tailor its services to the specific needs of its demographic in the same way that Option 1(b) could.
Criteria 5	This option presents a strong alignment with criteria 5 as there is already an existing combined authority within the Nottingham City conurbation. Additionally, this option meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (outlined above in Criteria 2), with the Nottingham city conurbation projected to have 611,518 residents by 2035 and Nottinghamshire to have 653,127.[7]
Criteria 6	Some overlap with existing wider system provision and several cross-boundary community networks already operating across this geography. The rural mix of rural and urban populations within the city-based authority would will present unique needs and therefore potentially new and bespoke channels will be required.

1. Criteria Assessment: Sensible Economic Areas for LGR in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
2. Criteria Assessment: Increasing Housing Supply and Meeting Local Needs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
3. Criteria Assessment: Children's SEND service in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
4. Criteria Assessment: Adult Social Care services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
5. Comparative Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (Phase 1)
6. Comparative Analysis: Experian Mosaic segmentation analysis (Phase 1)
7. Comparative Analysis: Population (Phase 1)
8. Comparative Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis (Phase 1)
9. Comparative Analysis: Deprivation (Phase 1)
10. Criteria Assessment: Homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
11. Criteria Assessment: Public Safety in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
12. Criteria Assessment in Children's Social Care in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of Option 2

This option demonstrates the weakest alignment against the MHCLG criteria. It would create councils with the greatest degree of fragmentation of travel to work, hospital and housing market areas and a significant population imbalance. It would also confine the City to existing boundaries rather than creating the conditions for growth.

2 **Two Unitary Authorities:** Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City



Alignment to MHCLG criteria

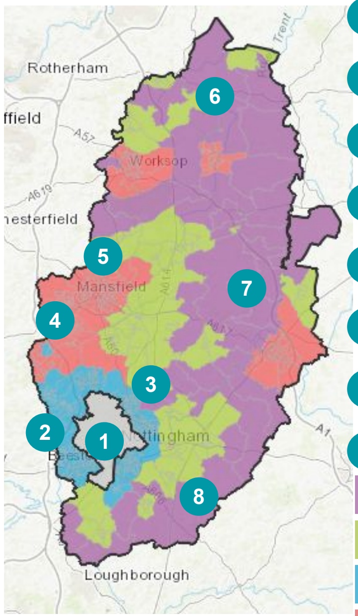
H M L

Criteria	Advantages and Disadvantages (Key: Footnote (Page))
Criteria 1	This option presents the weakest alignment with the Sensible Economic Area criteria of all three options, providing the lowest degree of economic self-containment [1 (10)] and the greatest fragmentation of travel to work areas, NHS hospital trust areas and the Inner Nottingham housing market areas.[1 (6, 15, 13)] Similarly, it presents the weakest alignment with the Sensible Geography criteria, as the ability to increase housing supply is limited by restrictions on available land for housing in Nottingham City.[2 (17)] Whilst present supply figures look strong, housing supply may not be able to be increased in the long-term due to reduction in sources of supply over time (e.g. absence of Green Belt land).[2 (19)] Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs have a significant shortfall and requires the highest number of houses to be identified across a large authority; a challenge not faced by the other options.[2 (18)] The contrast in deprivation levels are the highest amongst all options, with Nottingham City's average deprivation score at 34.9, significantly higher than Nottinghamshire's 19.[9]
Criteria 2	This has the weakest alignment with criteria 2, as it presents a significant population imbalance and the highest difference amongst all options, with Nottingham City projected to have 352,463 residents by 2035, fewer than Nottinghamshire's 912,182.[7] Additionally, financial resilience - key to the criteria 2 - is a concern, as Nottingham City's debt-to-reserves ratio stands at 83.9, exceeding Nottinghamshire's 16.5.[8] This imbalance increases financial vulnerability when compared to Option 1(b) and Option 1(e), and has the highest difference amongst all options.[8]
Criteria 3	Option 2 does not meet criteria 3, as it establishes unitaries with heightened viability issues and service imbalances.[3 (11)] There is a high social care cost imbalance in this option as the projected social care-to-council tax spending ratio is 1.12 for Nottingham City and 0.83 for Nottinghamshire.[4 (15)] This would cause financial strain due to high care demands paired with a limited tax base. While this option presents a greater GP availability, it is not enough to outweigh its structural weakness.[4 (15)]
Criteria 4	Option 2 presents a medium alignment with criteria 4. Looking at the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography, Option 1(b) combines combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings of all three options.[5] Arguably, Option 2 would less likely to satisfy the requirement as it may leave communities that do identify with the city in a different geography.
Criteria 5	This option presents the weakest alignment with criteria 5. Whilst it may support effective governance arrangements between the two new Unitary Authorities and the EMCCA as the reorganisation will reduce complexity and bureaucracy, it does not meet the requirements for a sensible population size ratio, with Nottingham City projected to have 352,463 residents by 2035 and Nottinghamshire to have 912,182.[7] This would not meet the threshold for a population of 500,000 or more.[7]
Criteria 6	Community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment will need to be supported. This option retains the need for continuous, strong, coordination between the City and County authorities for any major incidents that affects both areas. It may not fully capitalise on the benefits of aggregation that a single larger authority could offer for truly region-wide threats.[11 (Pg.24)] The sheer size of the rural/mixed urban-rural unitary could make it challenging to maintain the depth of local engagement and partnership.[5]

1. Assessment: Sensible Economic Areas for LGR in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
2. Assessment: Increasing Housing Supply and Meeting Local Needs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
3. Assessment: Children's SEND service in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
4. Assessment: Adult Social Care services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
5. Comparative Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (Phase 1)
6. Comparative Analysis: Experian Mosaic segmentation analysis (Phase 1)
7. Comparative Analysis: Population (Phase 1)
8. Comparative Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis (Phase 1)
9. Comparative Analysis: Deprivation (Phase 1)
10. Assessment: Homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
11. Assessment: Public Safety in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
12. Assessment in Children's Social Care in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis of 11 core cities in the UK

The table below shows the percentage distribution between rural and urban areas within the UK's eleven core cities. Option 1(b) most closely aligns with the average city demographic offering an urban density of 96.1% against the UK average of 98.41%, which is greater Option 1(e) (87.6%).



1 Nottingham
2 Broxtowe
3 Gedling
4 Ashfield
5 Mansfield
6 Bassetlaw
7 Newark and Sherwood
8 Rushcliffe

Rural Village
Rural Town & Fringe
Urban Minor Conurbation
Urban City & Town

Average proportion of rural population
Department for Rural Affairs - Rural Urban Classification Map - Nottingham Observatory

11 core cities	Rural %	Urban %
Bristol	0%	100%
Liverpool	0%	100%
Manchester	0%	100%
Nottingham (currently)	0%	100%
Birmingham	0.10%	99.90%
Glasgow [1]	0.40%	99.60%
Belfast [2]	0.43%	99.57%
Newcastle	2%	98%
Cardiff [3]	3%	97%
Sheffield	4.10%	95.90%
Leeds	7.50%	92.50%

The primary focus is a comparison of the percentage of rural and urban areas within each city, highlighting the predominance of urban regions. A key observation is that Option 1(b) is more aligned with demographic characteristics of a typical UK city, with an urban density of 96.1%, whilst Option (1e) would have the least urban density of all UK cities at 87.6%.

Option	Rural %	Urban %	Difference between %'s
Option 1(b)			
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	3.9%	96.1%	34.4%
Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	38.3%	61.7%	
Option 1(e)			
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	12.4%	87.6%	18.3%
Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	30.7%	69.3%	

Source: [1] Rural Urban Classification 2011 lookup tables for local authority areas; [2] Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2022; [3] Belfast Local Development Plan 2023; [4] Wales Government website

5a. Sensible Economic Area

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Economic Area (1/4)

Additional analysis completed by the nine councils assessed how the three options contribute to the MHCLG criteria 1a in creating a sensible economic area. There is no HMG definition of sensible economic area for local government meaning analysis has considered 'functional economic area' criteria.

Context

MHCLG officially set out their formal criteria for LGR proposals in February 2025, with criteria 1a requiring proposals to consider what would be a sensible economic area.

There is no established definition of a 'sensible economic area' for local government, though such an area should consider alignment of political and administrative structures with the actual economic behaviours and interactions of residents as far as is possible. A 'functional economic area' can act as a proxy for 'sensible economic area; using a range of factors such as TTWAs.

Sensible Economic Area: *Aligning political and administrative structures with how people live, work and travel*

Key considerations for sensible economic areas within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- In Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMA) were defined in a May 2021 report which analysed whether the Nottingham Inner and Outer HMAs could be considered FEMAs. It concluded that the five 'Core HMAs form a self-contained FEMA' and that 'an argument can be made that the Outer HMA is also a self-contained FEMA.'
- The 'kickstarting growth' mission aims to enhance living standards, supported by authorities putting in place policies across a sensible economic area.[2] Profiling conducted by the Office of National Statistics highlighted the economic challenges in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, emphasising the need for administrative boundaries that better align with sensible economic areas.
- The evaluation of boundaries has focussed on long-term alignment with the functional economy (50 year horizon), prioritising fit with economic function over alignment with short-term policy, whether local, regional or national.
- Reflecting the overall economy of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, all six authorities proposed under the 3 options would have higher than UK average inactivity rates, lower than average levels of enterprise formation, GDHI and productivity (GVA per head) – indicating the importance of sensible economic areas for local government to support long term prosperity of citizens and sustainability of local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Criteria	Sub-criteria used in the officer assessment	1b	1e	2
1a Sensible economic area	*Travel to work areas*	Medium	High	Low
	Economic self containment	Medium	High	Low
	Housing market area	Medium	High	Low
	Service market for consumers (NHS Hospital Trusts)	Medium	High	Low

Sources:
[1] Nottingham Core HMA and Nottingham Outer HMA Employment Land Needs Study
[2] Kickstarting Economic Growth

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Economic Area (2/4)

Whilst none of the options provide a 'perfect fit' against Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs), Option 2 provides the least coherence with TTWAs whilst Options 1b and 1e would most strongly represent a 'sensible economic area' given the lower levels of fragmentation.

Sensible Economic Area: *Aligning political and administrative structures with how people live, work and travel*

I. ***Travel to Work Areas*[1]*:*** Alignment with Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) can be used as a key determinant of a functional economic area; covering self-contained labour markets that reflect areas where people live, work and commute. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities fall predominantly within the Greater Nottingham, Worksop & Retford and Mansfield TTWAs, which also incorporate areas outside of the county (See Figure 1). Assessing the percentage of each TTWA population that resides in each current authority, Option 2 provides the least coherence with current TTWAs, whilst Option 1e marginally provides the strongest fit with the Nottingham TTWA for the Nottingham City conurbation and with the County based TTWAs for the Nottinghamshire authority. This is due to approx 8,600 Gedling authority residents that work in the Mansfield TTWA who would be living and working in the same authority under this option. However, assessment of the three options against TTWAs alone is insufficient given none provide a 'perfect fit', though though further analysis informs the degree of fit from fragmentation levels.

Option 2 would result in the greatest fragmentation of all options; particularly for the residents of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe absorbed into the Nottinghamshire authority. This is evidenced through assessment of the overall patterns of travel between authorities, which shows that the first choice work destination for residents from these authorities (and Nottingham) is Nottingham. Further evidence of fragemention within Option 2 is evidenced by the number of residents that commute to work from outside their home authority versus those that work and work within the same authority, with Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe authorities having the lowest percentage of residents that work work within the new Nottinghamshire unitary authority. This suggests that Option 2 does not represent a sensible economic area given the level of fragmentation.

Options 1b and 1e would provide the lowest degree of fragmentation when compared to Option 2. Option 1b presents a significant degree of fragmentation for Rushcliffe residents whilst Option 1e presents a significant degree of fragmentation for Gedling, leaving more residents working outside their home authority than in within it. Whilst the degree of fragmentation is slightly more significant for Gedling residents in Option 1e versus Rushcliffe residents in Option 1b, either option could represent a sensible economic area given the low levels of fragmentation across all authorities.

Figure 1: ***Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs)***

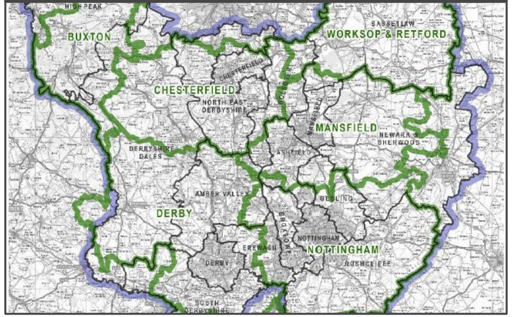
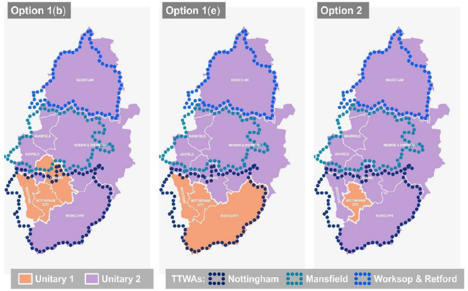


Figure 2: ***Submitted Options and Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs)***



MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Economic Area (3/4)

Options 1a and 1b have the highest degree of economic self-containment and most strongly align with Housing Market Areas and NHS Hospital Trust Area boundaries; whilst the degree of difference is marginal, Option 1e would more strongly represent a 'sensible economic area'

Sensible Economic Area: *Aligning political and administrative structures with how people live, work and travel*

I. ***Economic self containment:*** The overall percentage of workers living within each new authority that also work within that authority can be used to indicate the degree of economic 'self-containment', with a higher percentage indicating a greater self-containment. Options 1b and 1e are comparable, exhibiting a medium-degree of self-containment across both the Nottingham City conurbation (71.3% and 71.1% respectively) and Nottinghamshire (60% and 61% respectively). Option 2 exhibits the lowest-degree of self-containment across all options at 64% for Nottingham City and 58% for Nottinghamshire.

II. ***Housing market area:*** Alignment with local Housing Market Areas (HMA) can be used as a key determinant of a functional economic area (see Figure 1); covering 'whole council' areas and linking places where people live, work and move home. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities fall predominantly within the Nottingham Inner, Outer and Northern (Sheffield and Rotherham) HMAs, with the majority falling within the Nottingham Inner / Core. None of the proposed options align perfectly with the HMAs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, though Option 2 would provide the greatest fragmentation of the Nottingham Inner HMA and the residents of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe. Options 1b and 1e provide the strongest alignment to the Nottingham Inner HMA, though would fragment the residents of Rushcliffe and Gedling respectively and equally. Further analysis of each HMA population that would reside in each of the proposed new authorities indicates that Option 1e would marginally provide a better fit with the HMA geographies than Option 1b, though only by ~0.5 per cent (70.89 vs 70.41 percent).

III. ***Service market for consumers:*** Alignment with existing health service structures can be used as a key determinant of a functional economic area (see Figure 2). Option 1e suggests the strongest alignment between proposed authority boundaries and existing NHS Hospital Trust Area boundaries, including the Nottingham University Hospitals for the Nottingham City conurbation and Sherwood Forest Hospitals and Doncaster & Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals for for Nottinghamshire. This is supported by analysis of Middle Super Output Areas (MSOAs) where more than 50% of patients attended an NHS Trust Hospital, which indicates there is significant alignment between NHS Hospital Trust Area boundaries, Travel to Work Areas and Housing Market Area geographies.

Figure 1: ***Submitted Options and Housing Market Areas (HMAs)***

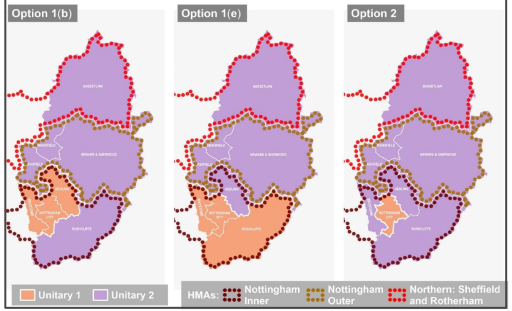
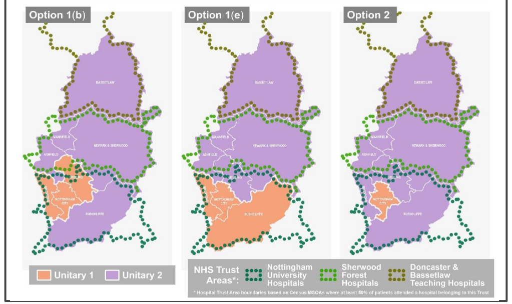


Figure 2: ***Submitted Options and NHS Hospital Trust Areas***



MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Economic Area (4/4)

Additional analysis suggests that Option 2 represents the least sensible economic are and whilst neither Option 1(b) or (e) represent an optimal fit as they both fragment travel to work and housing market areas, Option 1(e) marginally (< 1 percent) provides a stronger fit with TTWA and HMA's

Sub-criteria	1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
Travel to work areas (TTWAs)	Fragments the Nottingham TTWA for Rushcliffe residents (-3.50) to a lesser degree than Option 1(e) would for Gedling residents (-15.1). However, has a lower share of Nottingham TTWA population (65.2%) than Option 1e would (66.7%)	Fragments the Nottingham TTWA for Gedling residents (-15.1), more than Option 1(b) does for Rushcliffe residents (-3.50). However, has a higher share of the Nottingham TTWA population (66.7%) than Option 1b would (65.2%)	Least coherence with the Nottingham TTWA, particularly for Broxtowe (3.9), Gedling (2.7) and Rushcliffe residents (9.30). The Nottingham City authority would have the lowest share of the Nottingham TTWA population of all options (38%)
Economic self containment	Greater levels of economic self-containment than Option 2 for both the Nottingham City conurbation Authority (71.3%) and Nottinghamshire (60%) though differences are marginal to Option 1(e).	Greater levels of economic self-containment than Option 2 for both the Nottingham City conurbation Authority (71.1%) and Nottinghamshire (61%) though only marginally better than Option 1(b).	Lowest degree of economic self-containment for both the Nottinghamshire (58%) and Nottingham City (64%) authorities of any of the three options.
Housing market area (HMA)	High proportion of the population within the existing Nottingham Inner HMA would reside in the Nottingham City Authority (70.41%), suggesting a strong fit with HMA geographies. This however is marginally less than 1(e) (70.89%).	High proportion of the population within the existing Nottingham Inner HMA would reside in the Nottingham City Authority (70.89%), suggesting the strongest fit with HMA geographies. This is marginally more than 1(e) (70.41%).	Provides the greatest fragmentation of the Nottingham Inner HMA and the residents of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe
Service market for consumers	Medium alignment between authority boundaries and existing NHS Hospital Trust boundaries, with the Nottingham City conurbation covered by Nottingham Uni. and Sherwood Forest Hospitals.	Strongest alignment between authority boundaries and existing NHS Hospital Trust boundaries, with the majority of the Nottingham City conurbation covered by Nottingham Uni. Hospitals.	Lowest alignment, with Nottinghamshire covered by three NHS Hospital Trust Areas including Nottingham Uni. Sherwood Forest and Doncaster & Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals.
Summary	Provides a lesser degree of fragmentation when compared to Option 2 hence representing more of a sensible economic area, though the degree of fragmentation is slightly more than Option 1(e)	As with Option 1(b), represents significantly more of a sensible economic area than Option 2, with the degree of fragmentation being slightly less than Option 1(b), though this is marginal when assessed against all criteria.	Provides the lowest degree of economic self-containment for both authorities and greatest fragemention of travel to work, Housing Market and NHS Hospital Trust area(s), representing the least sensible economic area

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

5b. Sensible Geography

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Geography (1/4)

Additional analysis completed by the nine councils assessed how the three options contribute to the MHCLG criteria 1b in helping to increase housing supply and meet local need.

Context

MHCLG officially set out their formal criteria for LGR proposals in February 2025, with criteria 1b requiring proposals to be for a sensible geography.

The assessment assumes that reference to "meeting local need" refers to how well options fare in meeting local housing needs; particularly in respect of affordable housing solutions for those unable to access market housing for sale or rent, for gypsy, Roma and traveller groups and those with specialist housing needs.

Sensible Geography: *Increasing housing supply and meeting local needs…*

Key considerations for planning and housing within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- There are existing Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) that have worked together to determine Housing Market Areas and address strategic housing needs for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities; LPAs have worked within these groups for several years and have strong working relationship levels with shared strategic planning evidence based and common strategic planning policies.
- The spatial overview of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire together with the evidence led work undertaken on differing housing and economic market areas both point to a difference between the north and south of Nottinghamshire which suggests that in order to plan effectively for housing, future unitary authorities in Nottinghamshire should be organised to reflect these different characteristics.
- Collectively across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire as a whole, there appears to be sufficient sources of supply to meet future requirements; though both Ashfield and Broxtowe are currently required to prepare and implement an action plan designed to raise the level of housing delivery in their respective district as delivery is not meeting required.
- By the time new unitary authorities are created, the landscape of planning for housing will change as the East Midlands Combined Authority (EMCCA) will be given powers related to planning for future housing supply as part of Spatial Development Strategies (SDS)

Assessment of prioritised options against four factors:

Criteria	Sub-criteria used in the officer assessment	1b	1e	2
1b Sensible geographic breakdown	*Impact on potential to increase long term housing supply*	Medium	Medium	Low
	Impact on transition to system of a Spatial Development Strategy & Local Plans	Medium	High	Low
	Impact on meeting local housing needs	High	High	Low
	Impact on other issues such as mineral and waste planning	High	High	High

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Geography (2/4)

Updated analysis has assessed long-term issues around housing delivery through assessment of the 2024 published housing need figure for each authority over a 15-year period. This has been compared to current identified supply as set out in the latest published housing supply documents from each authority.

Sensible Geography: *Increasing housing supply and meeting local needs…*

I. ***Impact on potential to increase long term housing and meet local needs***: Option 1e sees the greatest difference in the number of homes needed and available over the next 15 years. Whilst Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe have significant sources of housing supply to meet local housing needs estimates with little need to allocate further strategic housing land at present, Nottinghamshire and the remaining council areas have a sizeable housing need to meet. The analysis notes however that there are significant opportunities to allocate further land to address this housing need in areas outside the Nottingham-Derby Green Belt, though this is dependent on a future Spatial Development Strategy.

The housing need per capita analysis from Phase 1 measured the demand for new homes by comparing forecasted housing requirements to the population,

Option		Population (current)	Forecast new homes (2022-2027)	Forecast new homes needed per 1000 people (2022-2027)
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	11,000	19.6
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	10,510	17.2
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	11,625	20.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	9,885	16.3
2	Nottingham City*	329,276	6,565	19.9
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	14,945	17.7

Updated analysis prepared by Heads of Planning has assessed the combined effect of housing needs and supply across the three options

Option		15 year local housing need (dw/pa)	Known housing supply over next 15y (dw)	Difference between need and supply
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	38,430	43,700	+5,270
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	47,845	43,790	-4,055
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	41,905	50,600	+8,695
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	44,370	36,890	-7,480
2	Nottingham City*	19,305	26,700	+7,395
	Nottinghamshire	66,970	59,035	-7,935

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Geography (3/4)

Assessment of prioritised options against the criteria considered how options would align with the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, the Trent Arc Cluster and available geography to allocate development without significant compromise to the existing (current) Green Belt policies. This could of course change as regional and national spatial planning policy is amended.

Sensible Geography: *Increasing housing supply and meeting local needs…*

I. ***Impact on potential to increase long-term housing and meet local needs (con't):*** Option 1b sees the smallest difference in housing need and supply, with Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling able to meet housing supply without significant reliance on greenfield land. The success of this approach however is dependent on (a) continued development of brownfield sites in Nottingham City and (b) amendment of the Green Belt boundary within Gedling and Broxtowe to accommodate housing growth on less valuable Green Belt land. Nottinghamshire and remaining council areas cover such a large geography the identification of further sites would not be problematic. The ability to increase housing supply in Option 2 is limited by restrictions on available land for housing in Nottingham City, and whilst present supply figures look strong, housing supply may not be able to be increased in the long-term due to reduction in sources of supply over time. Nottinghamshire remaining council areas have a significant shortfall and require the highest number of houses to be identified.

II. ***Impact on transition to system of a Spatial Development Strategy & Local Plans:*** Alignment with the current Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (GNSP) and minimising the separation of strategic growth locations between authorities were noted as key considerations for this criteria. In particular, grouping authorities which have major proposals for "Trent Arc" was specifically noted as strategically important. Option 1b would see several new development sites for the wider Nottingham area be split between the two authorities; necessitating the need for collaboration on existing growth locations and potentially slowing development of Local Plans and acceleration of housing supply. By contrast, Option 1e reflects existing joint planning efforts evidenced through development of the GNSP, and would provide a solid foundation for conversion into a new Unitary Local Plan through alignment with the evolving Regional Spatial Development Strategy and Mayoral Spatial Development Strategy. Option 1e would however require both councils to develop a shared vision for the northeastern part of the built-up area of Nottingham, which to date has formed a functional housing and economic market area for the purposes of strategic planning. Whilst Option 2 would require no changes to the Nottingham City authority and allow it to continue pursuing urban regeneration projects and focus on its own needs, greater demands would be placed on the Regional Spatial Development Strategy with sufficient guidance to ensure a clear growth strategy for Nottingham as a conurbation beyond the boundaries of the city. This presents a unique challenge if Nottinghamshire Authority wishes to purse a different development strategy; one which the other options do not need to resolve.

III. ***Impact on meeting Local Housing Needs:*** Existing collaborations formed to assess housing needs as part of the GNSP were noted as a key consideration for this criteria, as evidenced in Options 1b and 1e. Both options offer a shared strategy for increasing affordable housing on development sites through the release of land in the Nottingham Derby Green Belt as Grey Belt and provide a wide geography for the other Unitary Authority to accommodate the specific housing needs of its area. By contrast, Option 2 does not afford Nottingham City the same opportunity to meet its specific housing needs given the absence of a Green Belt and need to work with a surrounding larger authority. Whilst the size of Nottinghamshire would provide more opportunities to meet its housing needs, addressing the specific needs in localities across the region might be an ongoing challenge.

IV. ***Impact on other issues such as mineral and waste planning:*** Specialist knowledge and experience exists within the present Nottinghamshire County Council and needs to be retained. Option 1b and 1e would allow staff to be retained from the present County mineral and waste planning service; hosted by one of the two Unitary Authorities and provided as a commissioning service to the other Unitary Authority. This approach aims to preserve expertise and ensure consistent policy advice and application processing across both Unitary Authority. Option 2 would see the Nottinghamshire County Council service absorbed into the Nottinghamshire Unitary Authority without changing existing arrangements with Nottingham City (e.g. preparation of a joint waste Local Plan). All options present minimal impacts.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Geography (4/4)

Considering the above assessment of planning in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and the three options under consideration as to the appropriate geography to assist in increasing housing supply, Option 1e would best meet the MHCLG Criteria 1(b)

Sub-criteria	1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
Impact on potential to increase long term housing supply	*The least difference in number of homes needed and available over next 15yrs between the two authorities; excess of +5,270 in Nottingham conurbation and a gap of -4,055 in Nottinghamshire, though almost entirely dependent on Green Belt policies*	*The greatest difference in number of homes needed and available over next 15yrs between the two authorities; Nottingham authority having sizeable housing need to meet (gap of -7,480) versus the Nottingham conurbation (excess of +8,695)*	*Ability to increase housing supply is limited by restrictions on available land in Nottingham City; supply figures look strong however difficult to increase in long-term due to reduction in sources of supply. Nottinghamshire has significant shortfall.*
Impact on transition to system of a Spatial Development Strategy & Local Plans	*Several new development sites for the wider Nottingham area would be split between the two UAs; necessitating the need for collaboration on existing growth locations and potentially slowing development of Local Plans and acceleration of housing supply.*	*By contrast, Option 1(e) reflects existing joint planning efforts through GNSP, and provides a solid foundation for conversion into a new Unitary Local Plan through alignment with the evolving Development Strategies; would require a joint vision for NE part of Nottingham*	*Option 2 would allow Nottingham City to continue pursuing urban regeneration projects, though greater guidance needed by Regional Development Strategy to ensure a clear growth strategy for Nottingham City conurbation; a challenge not faced by other options*
Impact on meeting local housing needs	*Nottingham City conurbation to increase affordable housing through the release of Nottingham Derby Green Belt land as Grey Belt; though quantum of this is uncertain. Nottinghamshire would have a wide geography to accommodate needs of its area.*	*As with Option 1b, Nottingham City conurbation to release Nottingham Derby Green Belt land as Grey Belt; though the quantum of this is uncertain. Nottinghamshire would have a wide geography to accommodation needs of its area.*	*Unlike Options 1(b) and 1(e), Nottingham City restricted in the long-term given absence of Green Belt land. Nottinghamshire to have more opportunities though required to meet specific needs across a large authority; a challenge not faced by the other options.*
Impact on other issues such as mineral and waste planning	*Staff retained from the present County mineral and waste planning service; hosted by one of the two UAs and provided as a commissioning service to the other UA*	*Staff retained from the present County mineral and waste planning service; hosted by one of the two UAs and provided as a commissioning service to the other UA*	*Nottinghamshire County Council service absorbed into the Nottinghamshire UA without changing existing arrangements with Nottingham City (e.g. preparation of a joint waste Local Plan).*
Summary	Constraints such as urban capacity, Green Belt review and splitting of strategic growth areas would dominate and impact future growth options beyond current plan allocations, and may hinder long-term housing supply.	Councils already collaborating on GNSP and can utilise urban capacity of Nottingham City with opportunity for Greenfield release, producing two balance planning authorities in size with wide mix of housing supply resources	Initial urban capacity will eventually be utilised and long-term housing growth for Nottingham would need to be accommodated in Nottinghamshire, which may hinder accelerated housing growth in the whole area

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

5c. *Crucial Services*

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services

Additional analysis of the three options has been prepared by officers across all councils to assess how options meet MHCLG criteria 3 to improve service delivery or mitigate negative impact on crucial services.

Context

MHCLG officially set out their formal criteria for LGR proposals in February 2025, with criteria 3 requiring proposals to be to improved delivery of, or mitigate risks to negative impact on crucial services.

There is likely to be national funding changes given the current Fair Funding consultation however, this options analysis has taken place in the context of knowledge of current and forecast demand and funding. Potential wider national and regional policy changes have not been able to be factored in at this stage.

Impact on crucial services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on crucial services*

Key considerations for Crucial services within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- Addressing homelessness requires coordinated efforts across public services like health, social care, and probation. Preparation for local government reorganisation is essential to align financial resources and services with community needs. Each authority in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire has strategies for homelessness, it is important to align on strategies and priorities for improved outcomes.
- Around 13,000 people receive long-term support, with increasing needs and cost driven by factors like post-covid effects and government policies. Safeguarding concerns have risen, particularly financial abuse, linked to deprivation. The city faces high levels of deprivation and disability, impacting life expectancy and demand for support. Efforts are underway to digitise social care and develop shared care records. The net budget for social care is influenced by self-funders depleting assets, particularly in more deprived areas. Future legislation, such as NHS reforms and Mental Health Act changes, will affect service delivery and funding.
- Balancing the distribution of SEND services to meet regional demands and prevent disparities in resource allocation is key. Potential reforms impacting social care, homelessness, and SEND services must also be addressed. Managing high-demand and costly SEND provisions is challenging due to inadequate statutory funding. It is crucial for councils to collaborate during transitions, handle funding deficits, and prepare for national SEND reforms to ensure effective service delivery in the proposed unitary structure.
- The proposed reforms and future legislations under Children's Social Care offer a once in a lifetime opportunity to transform the systems and improve outcomes for children and families.

Initial assessment of prioritised options against four factors:

Criteria	Sub-criteria used in the officer assessment	1b	1e	2
3b Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk to negative impact on crucial services	*Data analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements*	High	Medium	Low
	The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements	Low	Low	Medium
	The risk presented by the different unitary arrangements	Medium	Low	High*
	Impact on delivery e.g. staffing considerations, geography	Medium	Medium	Medium

Note: * This indicates that Option 2 provides a low risk to the different unitary arrangements

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Adult Social Care 1/3)

Based on an assessment of the options using relevant data shows that the differences between Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) are marginal. Option 2 has greater variance and has higher rates across most metrics.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Adult Social Care*

I. ***Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:***

1(b): Under population there is a fairly even split, with a slightly higher count in the county. Council tax contribution is higher from the county (57%), yet they receive only 42% of the grant funding, indicating an imbalance. City + Broxtowe + Gedling get a larger proportion of the grant funding (58%) despite contributing less in council tax, potentially because of higher needs or deprivation indicators. Additionally, expenditure on adults is fairly balanced between the two proposed authorities, suggesting equitable service responsibilities. The social care to council tax ratio is relatively equitable at 0.94 for City + Broxtowe + Gedling and 0.97 for the rest of the area. The GP patient per practice is more evenly distributed than other options. For the unitary covering City + Broxtowe + Gedling the number of requests are marginally less than the rest of the County. A similar trend can be seen in number of people receiving long-term support. However, under health distribution the % of households in highest 2 deciles is an average of 40.6% for City + Broxtowe + Gedling in comparison to the rest of the county which is at an average of 17.6%. This option demonstrates a balanced distribution of care and service responsibilities and ensures no single unitary authority faces disproportionate strain. It also supports the case for equitable, sustainable service delivery across both authorities.

1(e): Under population both unitaries areas would serve relatively similar sized populations, ensuring no single authority is disproportionately burdened. City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe generate less council tax (46%) but receive greater grant funding 56%. The rest of the county generates more local revenue but receives less external support, which is typically more affluent areas. Expenditure on Adults' services a higher cost can be seen in the rest of the county (53% vs 47%). This proposed split avoids creating a significant imbalance in service demand and costs. The social cost rations are City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe is 0.87 whereas the rest of the County is 0.92, lower ratios indicate more cost-effective service delivery relative to council tax base. The GP patients per practice split is also relatively similar ensuring less pressure on the infrastructure of City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe. The unitary covering City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe has a greater number of new requests in comparison to the rest of the county. The same trend can be seen for people receiving long-term support. The health distribution split is greater under this option than 1b. The % of households in the lowest decline is 71.4% and % of households in the highest two deciles is at 40.6% for City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe. It is at 27.14% amd 7.62% respectively for the rest of the county.

Option 2: Nottingham City accounts for only 22% of the council tax base despite comprising about 28% of the population. The city receives 43% of the grant funding and there is greater reliance on central funding in the City making it more financial vulnerable. For Adult Social Care the county bears 74% of the costs and the City only 26%. Under projected spending pressure the city spending-to-tax ratio is 1.12 which means that the spending on social care would exceed council tax income by 12%. Whereas for the county the ratio is 0.8 which means the spending is less than income tax. The city would be financially overstrained, with high care needs but a limited tax base. Splitting the city from the rest of the county may disrupt integrated services such as social care and health. It fails the crucial services test as it makes it harder to deliver and coordinate key services. This option indicates a greater GP availability but this is't enough to outweigh the structural weakness of option 2. Under this option the split for new requests, people receiving long-term support and health distribution is greater than that seen in both Option 1(b) and 1(e).

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Adult Social Care 2/3)

Assessment of the options against the other sub-criteria are set out below including the risks presented by the different unitary arrangements and the impact on delivery. Though Option 1(b) and 1(e) have slight variations, 1(b) is preferable due to geographical and demographic factors.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Adult Social Care*

II. ***The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** Under Option 1(b) the two unitaties would be providing services to areas with greater commonality of needs - predominantly urban, in the city-based unitary of NBG, and to towns and villages, in the county. Option 2 provides the opportunity to scale service delivery for functions such as AMHP Care Quality and provider services. It will also help avoid the cost, time and risk involved in disaggregation of services. It will ensure that residents continue to receive services from colleagues that is consistently good.

III. ***The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** Under Option 1(b) there is a presence of numerous self-funders in Gedling and Broxtowe, combined with a reduction in council tax income, could potentially worsen funding challenges, as these regions have a less of a call on the net budget. Under Option 1(b) & 1(e), Mansfield and Ashfield exhibit the highest demand for all services, including safeguarding, mental health, physical support, and hospital discharge. Countywide services, although small are facing high demand, highlight the challenge of disaggregation in areas such as safeguarding, AHMP, shared lives and short breaks. Similarly, under Option 1(e) there are many self-funders in Rushcliffe and as previously stated when combined with loss of council tax income can lead to funding challenges as they have less call on the net budget. Additionally, the transition of residents to the new unitary structure alongside Nottingham City may lead to discrepancies in service quality due to differences in quality of experience, service costs and the potential for poor continuity of care as there are variations in services and service levels between the county and the city. Under option 2 no risks were identified that do not already exist in the service. Option 2 is neutral on outcomes and delivery given it would be status quo.

IV. ***Impact on delivery:*** Under Option 1(b) the potential impact on provider services arises from the possibility of assets could be situated in a different council from those where the residents utilising them currently reside. Newark and Rushcliffe are experiencing a shortage in nursing and residential care, while Mansfield and Ashfield face an increased number of care quality concerns, necessitating greater capacity. Under Option 1(b) and 1(e) there are significant variations in recruitment and retention across the county, with Rushcliffe identified as a recruitment hotspot. Market sustainability is challenged by disparities in provider costs, particularly in bed-based care for working-age adults, with Ashfield's average residential rates being considerably lower than those in Rushcliffe. Similar variations are evident in the costs for those aged 65 and over, Bassetlaw residential cost rate is £102pw less than Rushcliffe (£5k pa) this is further impacted by levels of client contributions. Nursing capacity has significantly diminished in Mid-Nottinghamshire since February 2023, resulting in the loss of 145 nursing registered beds. The complexity of health and system footprints makes apportionment by district difficult, spanning three hospital trusts. Although home care rates show no significant hourly differences across districts, social care record disaggregation and integration with the City Council could present a challenge potentially requiring system replatforming of the Mosaic system. Under Option 1(e) the potential impact on daycare services ending up in a different council that where residents are using them currently. It can also impact hospital discharges and other provider issues. Option 2 maximises the opportunity of working in partnership on a Nottinghamshire footprint with services that are county based. It also for neighbourhood partnerships as efforts are focused on a new relationship as opposed to disaggregating partnerships and adding in the complexity of contracts.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Adult Social Care 3/3)

Option 1(b) and Option 2 are most balanced for accommodating self-funders and align with strategic and operational needs. Option 1(b) is preferred over Option 1(e) due to its alignment with the geographic and demographic characteristics of Nottingham City.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Adult Social Care*

Conclusion: The analysis concludes that while there is a notable risk associated with disaggregation and quality of service delivery, Options 1(b) and 1(e) present similar levels of risk. The uneven distribution of contracts, assets, and services across the city leads to increased costs and risks when disaggregating services, although this disparity does not significantly affect the risk levels between options 1(b) and 1(e). Effective financial modeling is essential to manage the costs and resources required for these options, addressing system integration and wider issues comprehensively. The assessment suggests that Option 1(b) and option 2 are most balanced for accommodating self-funders and contributions, considering strategic and operational needs. Option 1(b) is preferred over 1(e) strategically due to its alignment with geographic and demographic characteristics of The City, particularly for more urban areas like Broxtowe and Gedling, which are better integrated with the city's infrastructure and facilities.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Children's Social Care (1/3)

Below is an assessment of the options against data analysis and comparisons of different unitary arrangements and the opportunities presented.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children's Social Care*

I. ***Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:***

Children Looked After: Options 1(b) and 1(e) present similar pictures of need for children's social care, with broadly comparable caseloads in each of the options. However Option 2 results in a greatly imbalanced picture, with 639 children looked after by the City unitary authority, while 905 children will require the support of the new 'Nottinghamshire' unitary authority. Similar trends can be seen for number of referrals, the total for Nottinghamshire is 7,410 whereas the total for Nottingham City is 3,926. Option 1(b) suggests that referrals received would be broadly equal (50% for both) whereas Option 1(e) offers sees slightly more referrals in the wider 'county' area (48% for Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe and 52% for the rest of Nottinghamshire). Option 2 has the greatest difference where Nottinghamshire receiving 65% of the proposals and Nottingham City receiving 35%. This needs to be seen in the context of fragmentation, where resources and staff will require reallocation and the continuity of care for these children will be compromised by reorganisation.

Characteristics of family need: Nottinghamshire sees similar characteristics to much of the country in that neglect is the most common reason for engagement with children's services. However Broxtowe and Gedling record historically high incidences of physical abuse, consistently recording average rates that are 80-90% higher than Rushcliffe over the past three years,. Additionally, Broxtowe reports higher instances of sexual abuse in comparison to Gedling and Rushcliffe. Overall, the levels of all types of need in Broxtowe and Gedling indicate greater alignment with Nottingham City than with Rushcliffe.

Family risk factors: Options 1(b) and 1(e) also differ from Option 2 in terms of the risk factors which result in referral to children's services. Over the past three years, Broxtowe and Gedling have experienced the highest rates of alcohol misuse among parents, with average rates of 48 and 54 per 10k, compared to 25 per 10k in Rushcliffe. There is also a significant disparity in drug misuse among children, with Broxtowe and Gedling reporting 17 instances per 10k, in comparison to Rushcliffe reporting 6 per 10k. Parental drug misuse is notably higher in Broxtowe and Gedling by 70-80%, compared to Rushcliffe. Domestic abuse cases are more frequent in Broxtowe and Gedling, at 22-23 cases per 10k compared to just 11 per 10k in Rushcliffe.Overall, Broxtowe and Gedling exhibit similar levels of alcohol abuse, drug abuse and domestic violence, with Rushcliffe consistently showing rates that are significantly lower than these areas.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Children's Social Care (2/3)

Below is an assessment of the options against data analysis and comparisons of different unitary arrangements and the opportunities presented.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children's Social Care*

I. ***Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:***

Contextual Safeguarding: Levels of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) have been dropping across Broxtowe and Rushcliffe over the past three years although the rate in Broxtowe remains almost double that in Rushcliffe. In Gedling the rate is higher than both other districts. Levels of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) have also reduced across all three districts, although average rates in Broxtowe and Rushcliffe over the three-year period are similar and two to three times higher than in Rushcliffe. Overall, levels of CCE and CSE in Broxtowe and Gedling are aligned to those in Nottingham City.

II. ***The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** Under Option 1(b) the two new unitary authorities will be providing services to footprints with greater commonality of needs which is mainly urban areas, in the city-based unitary of Nottingham City + Broxtowe and Gedling, and to towns and villages in the county. This option offers a more balanced split of Children's Social Care expenditure at 51% for the rest of Nottinghamshire and 49% for Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling. Under Option 1(e) there is an opportunity for a fairer share of tax base across the two new unitary authorities. Finally, Option 2 would avoid any unnecessary fragmentation of CSC. A key factor in determining the success of any arrangement will be engagement with partners such as schools, health providers and the police who are critical in recognising, referring and supporting local authorities in keeping children safe and well.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Children's Social Care (3/3)

Assessment of the prioritised options against the other four factors considered: The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements and the impact on delivery. Option 1(b) better aligns with the stated criteria.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children's Social Care*

III. ***The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** Option 1(b) results in a greater risk of disaggregation of services and a need to consider programmes such as Family First implementation. Under Option 1(e) if Rushcliffe is disaggregated from the county area to an expanded city area it would have little impact in terms of demand for either new authority. However, relative differences in tax base would present issues in funding delivery. Option 1(e) has a share of children's total expenditure that is three times that of Option 1(b). Opton 2 provides little risk other than the current challenges facing Nottingham City which include current cost pressure and no increase in tax base.

IV. ***Impact on delivery:*** Option 1(b) brings together areas which are similar to each other. Those delivering CSC in the City, Broxtowe and Gedling currently serve large urban conurbations. This option offers the best alignment of service. In Option 1(e), assets may be located in the other authority which would impact, for example, children going to special schools. This is a challenge as spaces are generally filled by the current County service with any surplus places offered to the City. Under this scenario, the situation could be reversed as it would challenge Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe to deliver services to more rural communities that border another county (Leicestershire). Option 2 would disadvantage Nottingham City due to the current tax base, population/demographic and level of needs which would have a significant impact on delivery of CSC. This option offers the least change, disruption and impact to services as CSC is an upper tier function and there no change to the existing footprint.

Conclusion: Option 2 does not meet the MHCLG criteria as it does not establish sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base. It creates an imbalance which could be an advantage for Nottinghamshire County Council and disadvantage for Nottingham City. Although there is very little difference in the distribution of overall levels of need between Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) , Broxtowe and Gedling more closely align to Nottingham City in levels of need, family risk factors, and contextual safeguarding than Broxtowe and Rushcliffe do. Additionally, children with universal, targeted or specialist SEND needs in Gedling have greater commonality, connection, proximity, association, identity, access and transport links with Nottingham City than those in Rushcliffe. Therefore, Option 1(b) offers a better alignment with the MHCLG criteria.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Children with SEND 1/2)

Assessment of the prioritised options against data analysis, comparison of different unitary arrangements.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children with SEND*

I. ***Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:***

SEND measures: Under Option 1(b) and 1(e) the number of initial requests for an EHC Plan in the calendar year 2024 is relatively similar. Under Option 2 the number of requests in Nottingham City is 2,296 in comparison to the rest of the county at 579. Option 2 would create a greater split. For new EHCP demand, Option 1b has a more balanced distribution in comparison to 1(e) or 2. A similar trend can be seen for number of children subject of an EHCPs as of January 2025 and the proportion of children subject to it.

Education measures: Under education measures number of persistently absent pupils (10%+) the numbers are relatively similar for Option 1(b) and 1(e) whereas Option 2 has more variance as Nottingham city has 9,760 whereas the rest of the county has 21,190. For number of severely absent pupils (50+%) a similar trend can be seen. Additionally, for number of permanently excluded pupils and proportion of pupils with one or more suspensions figures for all options are similar to one another.

Additional measures: Option 1(b) and 1(e) present relatively similar figures across all categories. The largest difference can be seen under Option 2, where 71% of the under 17 population resides in Nottinghamshire in comparison to the City. Similar challenges can be seen in number of state funded primary, secondary and special schools and pupil headcount in these institutions. The analysis compares Gedling and Rushcliffe districts using secondary school locality and pupil numbers to determine their characteristics as more "City-like" or "County-like." Gedling has 6,885 secondary pupils attending six schools, with 89% attending schools in postcodes bordering Nottingham City directly (NG4, NG5), indicating strong integration and proximity to the city. Conversely, Rushcliffe has 8,004 pupils across seven schools, but only 48% attend schools near the city boundaries due to physical separations like the River Trent. Many Rushcliffe pupils attend schools further from the city, highlighting its more "County-like" characteristics. Thus, Gedling children's services have closer connections and are more aligned with urban dynamics than Rushcliffe.

1(b): Expenditure on children's services is fairly balanced between the two proposed authorities, suggesting equitable responsibility for delivering services. This option would see a balanced distribution of needs and service delivery, and ensures no single unitary authority faces disproportionate strain. It also supports the case for sustainable service delivery across both authorities.

1(e): Both unitaries areas would serve relatively similar sized populations, ensuring no single authority is disproportionately burdened. Children's service is relatively evenly distributed. This proposed split avoids creating a significant imbalance in service demand and financial burden

Option 2: The data suggests that this option has the greatest imbalance imbalance of SEND services and provision split across the two areas. The split for % of share of childrens' total expenditure is 60% for the Country and 40% for the rest of the county.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Children with SEND 2/2)

Detailed assessment of the prioritised options against the other factors considered: the opportunities,risks and potential impact on delivert. Option 1(b) best aligns with the goals of LGR.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children with SEND*

II. ***The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** Under Option 1(b) and 1(e) there is an opportunity to work collaboratively to support children with SEND across both unitaries. Option 2 will enable the locality-based SEND improvement approach to continue for all children and young people with SEND. Additionally, there would be continued improvements to statutory delivery. The distribution of schools and their relationship with new authorities is key to managing future SEND need effectively.

III. ***The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** Under Option 1(b) and 1(e) a new plan for 150 additional specialist school places in Broxtowe aims to address the need for special education capacity, though it might have a limited effect on the overall sufficiency across Nottinghamshire and could particularly benefit Nottingham City. Under Option 1(e) a significant loss of revenue fund statutory SEND services from Rushcliffe which has lower rates of children with EHCPs or specialist provision than other areas of Nottinghamshire. Option 2 maintains the current provision.

IV. ***Impact on delivery:*** Option 1(b) has less impact on delivery in comparison to the other models as level of demand for SEND services in Broxtowe and Gedling are in the average band. Under Option 1e there would be a need for joint working with a shadow authority to put a plan in place for SEND sufficiency which could lead to significant impact on availability of provision. Additionally, local authority statutory teams would see very little impact. Option 2 would main the current provision.

Conclusion: Option 1(b) best aligns with local government reorganisation criteria, offering a balanced distribution of demand and service delivery for SEND and not posing challenges to the reallocation of resources, workforce, or caseloads. Although both Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) present a risk to the sufficiency of specialist SEND provision, this risk could be managed through collaborative efforts between authorities during the shadow authority period. Option 1(e) also aligns well with reorganisation aims, but faces challenges due to lower SEND demand in Rushcliffe, leading to an imbalance between service demand and the income needed to meet it. As a result, the impact on SEND sufficiency might be more pronounced than in Option 1(b). Option 2 does not fulfill the reorganisation objectives, as it creates unitaries with increased viability issues and perpetuates an imbalance of SEND services and provision across two areas.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Homelessness 1/2)

Set out below is an assessment of the prioritised options against data analysis and comparison of different unitary arrangements. Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) have relatively similar values to one another. Option 2 has greater variability and higher rates across most metrics.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on homelessness*

I. *Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:*

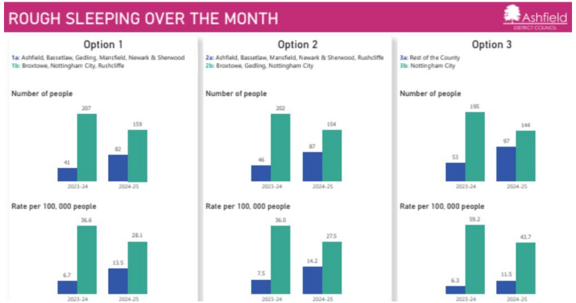
Household prevention duty: The data shows a comparison between Option 1(b), 1(e) and 2 regarding the number of households owed prevention duty and the rate per 1,000 households for two time periods, 2023-24 and 2024-25. Option 1e offers the lowest values for both years in terms of lowest rate per 1,000 households. If reducing the actual number of households owed prevention duty is looked at Option 1(e) still offers the lowest numbers relatively in comparison to Option 1(b) or Option 2. However, it is important to note that the differences between the three options are relatively moderate.

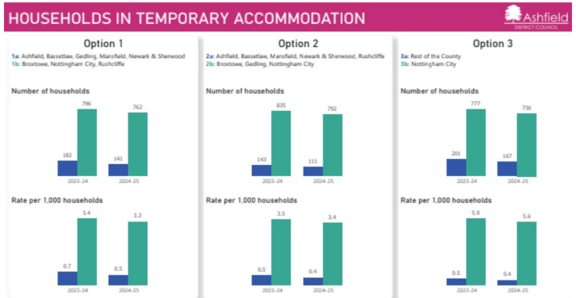
Households owed Relief Duty: The data shows the three options regarding household owed relief duty. Under number of households discrepancies can be seen in all options. Under Option 1(e) greater pressure will be felt on Broxtowe, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe as the number of households in 2023-24 were 1,970 where as in the rest of the areas the total was 907. A gradual decrease can be seen in 2024-25. Similarly, under rate per 1,000 households option 2 shows extreme values for Nottingham city in comparison with the rest of the county.

Households in temporary accommodation: The data compares the three options regarding households in temporary accommodation. Under number of households, Option 1(b) puts greater pressure on Broxtowe, Gedling and Nottingham city. However, it is important to note that the figures for 1(b) and 1(e) are relatively similar to each other across both time frames. For rate per 1,000 households option demonstrates fluctuations and higher numbers in comparison for Nottingham City than the rest of the county.

Rough sleeping over the month: The data compares the three options regarding rough sleeping over the month. Under number of people the split between Option 1(e) is greater than Option 1(b) and option 2. This indicates that there will be a larger number of people experiencing rough sleeping over the month in Broxtowe, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe in comparison to the County and also in comparison to Option 1(b) and 2. For rate per 100,000 people option 2 shows significantly higher rates for Nottingham City in comparison to the rest of the county. It is important to note that figures were relatively similar for Option 1(b) and 1(e).

Households on housing register: Option 1b and Option 1e has very similar values where as option 2 shows fluctuations highlighting higher discrepancies in demand or resource allocation. Similarly, rate per 1,000 household is highest for option 2 suggesting a more concentrated or higher demand in Nottingham city, which would indicate a need for enhanced housing solution or capacity.





Across most categories Option 1(b) & 1(e) show similar patterns. They generally provide moderate and stable numbers for households and rates, indicating a balanced approach to resource allocation and management. Option 2 has greater variability and often higher rates in specific categories, especially rough sleeping and housing register metrics.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Homelessness 2/2)

Set out below is an assessment of each options against the other factors considered: the opportunities, risks and potential impact on delivery. The analysis does not identify a preferred option, however, based on geographic and demographic similarities Option 1(b) would align more to the MHCLG criteria than the other options.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on homelessness*

II. ***The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** The document identifies several opportunities that can potentially enhance service delivery and resilience across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. By leveraging economies of scale, authorities can achieve more resilient services and better value, through broader geographical procurement and resource sharing, including staffing, IT, and out-of-hours arrangements. This could lead to centralised coordination and an effective response to performance metrics and data management. There's potential to adapt services to address intensified needs through larger geographical coverage, such as establishing women-specific homelessness hostels. A unified strategy and sharing best practices can lead to consistent approaches to tackling homelessness challenges, complemented by enhanced collaboration between housing and social care sectors. Improvements in housing/TA supply can be achieved through shared access to grants/funding/land for new build, renovation or acquisition. Opportunity for programmes such as Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) and changing futures as it would provide better consistency of approach in supporting disadvantaged people across the two areas. Under Option 1(e), many Rushcliffe rough sleepers would have access to Nottingham City which could improve and streamline customer experience.

III. ***The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** The document outlines serval generic threats and risks associated with homelessness strategies and services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It highlights a changing policy context, including reforms to private sector housing and supported housing regulations, which could affect service delivery. Changes to the local connection criteria might complicate meeting levels of need, if the criteria is broadened and anticipated revisions to funding formulas for the Homelessness Prevention Grant could impact funding availability, especially if current funding streams are merged or altered based on geographic or population factors. Manfield's unique Domestic Abuse Housing accreditation stands at risk if other areas fail to achieve similar recognition. Furthermore, there is a need for increased responsiveness to individuals moving across geographic boundaries, particularly in the South/City areas. Predicted future trends suggest an increase in homelessness due to factors such as rental reform and rising living costs, although the options may not significantly affect visible rough sleeping or street-based activity, which remain concerns for residents. Additionally, the rising use of temporary accommodations poses a financial threat to general fund resources, with variations occurring among different authorities based on need and TA supply. Lastly, potential disinvestment in non-statutory services by Public Health and the risk of reduced locally driven insight and service delivery due to funding competition are also flagged as concerns. Under Option 1(b) & 1(e) there is a risk that the sole authority left with links to the hospital trust in the South would struggle to have the same impact around housing/homelessness related challenges. This risk could be mitigated by a new city-aligned authority taking lead on the relationship and work for both areas.

IV. ***Impact on delivery:*** Under Option 1(b) & 1(e) there could be reduced homelessness impact which suggests the possibility that these options could dilute the focus on homelessness due to changes in administrative boundaries and service configurations. Such dilutions may lead to less effective strategies and approaches to tackling homelessness because resources and efforts might be spread too thin across newly defined authorities. Changes in how services are organised might lead to unclear or fragmented service pathways, affecting how people move through systems to receive support and housing. Finally, there is a concern that restructuring could lead to weaker collaboration and communication between health services and housing/homelessness services. This could hinder integrated efforts to address homelessness.

Conclusion: It is important to note that homelessness does not have significant impact in choosing between either of the options; but should be considered in designing service delivery or organisational functions.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services

Set out below is a high level summary of the assessment of the Crucial Services criteria for the options under consideration in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Sub-criteria	1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
Data analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements	*Similar patterns across Option 1(b) and 1(e), though 1(b) favoured due to similar geography and demography e.g. children in Gedling with social care needs having greater identity with / proximity to City services.*	*Rushcliffe experiences lower demand for SEND, resulting in an imbalance between the demand for the services and income required to sustain them. Nonetheless, when overall data is examined similar trends can be seen between 1(b) and 1(e).*	*Option 2 shows variability and generally higher rates in data pertaining to homelessness, ASC and SEND. This option creates an imbalance in ASC and SEND services*
The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements	*No specific opportunities identified for improving homelessness and SEND services, though Option 1(b) would offer more balanced distribution of CSC and deliver ASC services to areas with greater community of needs.*	*No specific improvement opportunities identified for ASC and SEND, though Option 1(e) may help streamline homelessness services as rough sleepers have a local connection to Notts City, and provide a more fair share of tax base for CSC.*	*Enhanced service delivery for functions such as AMHP quality and provider services. Option 2 can help mitigate the cost, time and risk associated with disaggregation. Furthermore, it enables a localised approach to SEND.*
The risk presented by the different unitary arrangements	*Concerns around disaggregation of ASC, CSC and SEND sufficiency, alongside general impact on provider services as services could be situated in areas where individuals no longer reside.*	*There is a loss of revenue to fund statutory SEND services due to Rushcliffe having lower rates of EHCPs or specialist provisions compared to the other areas of Nottinghamshire. The share of children's total expenditure is greater.*	*No specific risks have been identified for Option 2, and it presents no new risks beyond those currently existing within the services e.g it is not impacted by disaggregation.*
Impact on delivery e.g. staffing considerations, geography	*Potential fragmentation of homelessness services given confused pathways and weaker relationships between health and housing/homeless teams/services.*	*There are challenges with delivery of ASC, CSC and SEND services, particularly the loss of income for the county authority.*	*There is no impact on the delivery of homelessness, ASC or SEND as the current service provision is maintained. However, there is still challenges with the imbalances present within these services.*
Summary	Option 1(b) aligns most effectively with the LGR objectives, providing a relatively balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND. Broxtowe and Gedling also have higher population demographics similar to the City.	Option 1(e) somewhat aligns with the LGR objectives but faces geographic and demographic challenges for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND services, with the county-authority facing a loss of revenue.	Option 2 does not meet the LGR objectives due to increased viability issues and services imbalances, despite maintaining the current level of service delivery.

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

6. Financial Analysis

Financial Modelling: Updated Analysis Overview

This section provides an overview of the phase 1 analysis and the updates made since March 2025.

Phase 1 Analysis

In Phase 1 an initial evidence based options analysis was completed for local government reform. The financial model formed a part of the quantitative analysis to investigate the costs and benefits for a wide range of options all of which were based on current district and unitary authority Boundaries.

The s151 officer met on 15 May to review the financial model methodology and outputs. During that session there were some further clarifications sought. Subject to these clarifications all agreed that the case was sufficient to enable the s151s to provide assurance to their Councils that the case was appropriate.

This position was confirmed at the Finance Officers meeting on 23 May. The revised financial analysis was shared with s151 officers on 3 June ahead of a LGR specific meeting of s151s on 9 June. This included some sensitivity analysis the group requested on the assumptions.

In addition the County Council have undertaken some analysis on the potential impact on Options 1b &1e of social care self funders in the event that leads to an important difference in the cases. It has been concluded that this does not.

Updates post March 2025

Assumptions	1	Some changes were made to assumptions such as reduction in front office FTE, service delivery FTE, reduction in back office FTE, property rationalisation, SRA cost per new unitary authority.
Benefit Phasing	2	The benefit realisation period has been changed to 30% in the first year, 50% in the second year and 100% after that.
Definitions	3	The definitions of types of FTE service are have been provided. This includes specific definitions for front office, service delivery and back office.
Overall benefits and costs	4	As a result, there is a change in the total overall benefits and costs since the figures set out in the interim plan in March 2025.

See Appendix B for the methodology and assumptions applied

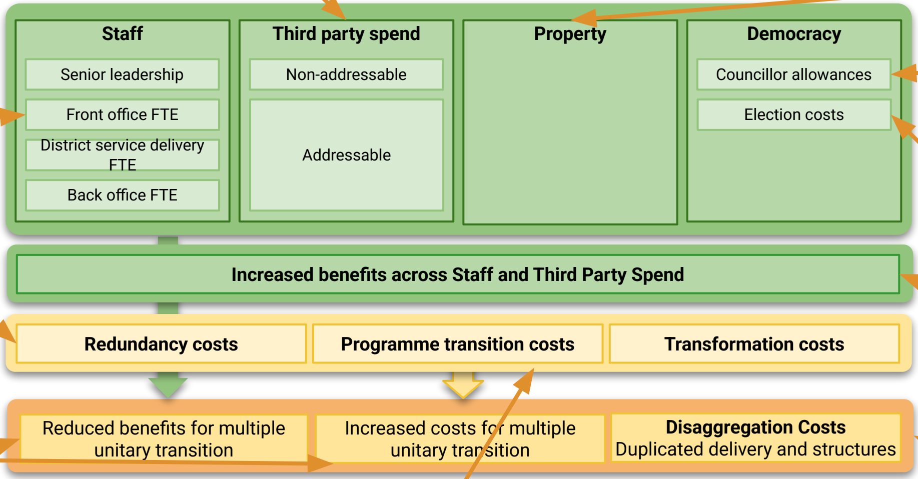
Financial Modelling: Definitions (1/3)

The financial analysis model relies on a number of assumptions, primarily based on publicly available outturn data, information from each council's own transparency data, or by applying changes which have been demonstrated across previous LGR proposals.

Third-party spend refers to all payments made by local councils for goods and services from external suppliers, excluding grants, taxations, and other charges. Addressable spend is the portion of this expenditure that can be influenced through procurement or commissioning strategies such as negotiating contracts or seeking competitive bids. In contrast, non-addressable spend includes costs that are less flexible and mandated by law, making them harder to influence.

Property expenditure relates to the cost associated with acquiring, maintaining, and managing both **operational** properties (used for delivering council services) and **investment** properties (held for income or capital appreciation). This includes expense such as maintenance, utilities, insurance and management fees.

FTE is calculated as a proportion of spend as supplied in public spending data. **Net revenue expenditure** is used to avoid double-counting any income or grant transfers. **Senior leadership** salaries are calculated across the top three organisational tiers as per transparency reporting.



Member allowances are based on rates of Basic and Special Responsibility payments published in transparency reporting. These costs are used to determine the likely cost of one or more new democratic structures in new authorities

Election costs use a total of votes cast in a previous election cycle across all council elections, and a cost-per-vote of £3 calculated by the Electoral Commission

Redundancy costs do not include actuarial strain as this is highly individualised. A payment of 30% of salary is assumed.

Benefits are profiled to be fully effective in Year 3, to account for the need to complete staff changes and undertake contract renegotiations.

Costs such as the creation of new councils, marketing, ICT and consultation are increased proportionately where more than one new council is to be formed. Similarly, fixed **benefits of transition** are shared across all new bodies.

Disaggregation Costs are incurred where an option involves dividing a county level authority into two or more unitaries, and represents the ongoing cost of duplicating management and operations of statutory services, including social care, education and public health. **An element of disaggregated costs therefore recur each year in options with more than one unitary authority**

Transition costs include anticipated redundancies due to duplicated leadership structures, and elements of one-off spending relating to creating, marketing and programme managing transition to a new council.

Financial Modelling: Definitions (2/3)

Definitions for Front office, Service delivery and back office are set out below.

Category	Definition	Activities	
Front office	Front office described all the activities that involve interaction with customers and/or have an immediate impact on customer service delivery. It involves all activities that lead up to and follow on from serving the customer, without capturing the actual act of delivering the service. ***A customer is defined as a person who uses any council service.***	• Enquiry Handling • Processing Requests and Applications • Managing Appointments • Eligibility • Simple and Rules Based Assessment • Complex Assessment • Approval of Service	• General Administration (for frontline operations) • Recording and Data Entry • Closing Record • Management and Supervision (for frontline operations) • Workforce Planning (for frontline operations) • Workforce Scheduling (for frontline operations) • Billing and Receiving Payments
Service Delivery	The actual delivery of a frontline service on behalf of the council which fulfils the needs of external customers.	• Service Delivery	
Back office	The activities aligned to this category provide support to other service areas: • Corporate Services include the activities that support the council in operating effectively on a day-to-day basis. • Strategic Services contain the activities that are central to influencing and executing the councils corporate strategy. • As for Support Services, these activities will all contain an element of transactional activity (e.g. within HR and Finance), but are more broadly aligned to the delivery and support of the strategic direction of the council.	• General Administration (Corporate, Strategic & Support Services) • Health and Safety • Technology • People Management • Budgets and Financial Management • Payroll Services • Key Data Sets • Property, Estate and Facilities Management • Management and Supervision (Corporate, Strategic & Support Services) • Stores and Distribution • Workforce Planning (Corporate, Strategic & Support Services) • Fleet and Plant Management	• Democratic services and support provided to elected Members • Legal Advisory Services • Programme and Project Management • Purchasing, Procurement and Commissioning • Managing Contracts • Marketing, PR and Communications • Strategic Planning and Policies • Research and Consultation • Quality Assurance, Performance Management and Improvement • Business Information, Data Analysis and Reporting

Financial Modelling: Definitions (3/3)

Definitions for the various elements of the financial model are set out below.

Definitions	
Transition costs	Costs involved in moving from existing systems to another. This includes fixed costs and redundancy costs incurred (excluding disaggregation). These are one-off costs to reorganisation within Nottingham & Nottinghamshire.
Benefits of Aggregation	Benefits that would arise from reorganisation. This primarily looks at the benefits of collapsing multiple local authorities into a fewer number of local authorities. This will include savings made on: staff, third party spend and property. In addition to this, benefits arising from savings on running democratic processes are also defined. There are percentage reductions applied to each type of benefit saving.
Annual benefits	Annual benefits that are generated as a result of reorganisation. These are calculated as a sum of the front office, service delivery and back office expenditures, as well as third party spend, senior management, property and democracy costs.
Recurring benefit after 5 years	The recurring annual benefit after five years of reorganisation. It is estimated that the full benefits will be realised after five years.
Payback period (years)	The payback period is the time required for the investment in unitarisation to generate sufficient cash flows to recover its initial cost.

Financial Modelling: Purpose and limitations

The options analysis financial modelling provides a tool for comparing potential options for future LGR, based on publicly available data and a set of agreed assumptions. The model accounts for the cost of delivering the new structure in terms of **transition** and **ongoing disaggregation** costs of leading delivery of all unitary council services across the new geographies identified in each option.

What the model does:

- The financial model provides an **independent and policy-neutral comparison** of differing structural approaches to LGR.
- It focuses on the **costs of transitioning** and **running costs of new leadership and political structures.**
- It includes the anticipated costs needed to undertake **the next phases of LGR activity** - programme design and management, building a detailed business case, ICT requirements, delivering consultation and comms, etc.
- Combined with potential additional analysis it provides **a foundation for the detailed business case** to follow.
- The model is **recognised by MHCLG and Treasury** as a reasonable means of determining the potential scale of benefits available from LGR at options analysis stage. It is not developed to the level of detail that is required for a full proposal.

What the model doesn't do:

- The financial model will not at this stage predict the **costs of delivering services** in a new structure.
- It does not account for future policy decisions around the **apportionment of debt, reserves or assets** between constituent councils.
- It does not account for **actuarial costs of redundancy**, which require a detailed review of individual employee's circumstances.
- The transformation costs and benefits are estimates based on experience in other local authorities applied to local spend, they do not represent a **detailed review of your third party spend.**
- The model is based on static, published data and **does not include the influence of increased demand** on running costs.

Financial Modelling: Updated analysis

The financial model incorporates key structural and management costs, including redundancy estimates, senior leadership changes, and anticipated savings across cost categories.

	Transition costs (£)	Annual benefits (£)	Net benefit after five years (£ total)	Payback period (years)
Option 1: 1(b) & 1(e)	£28,848,294	£24,620,878	£64,711,043	1.3
Option 2: Nottinghamshire & Nottingham City	£21,250,744	£24,620,878	£72,308,593	Less than 1 year
Option 3: Single Unitary Authority (**Comparative purposes only**)	£19,249,433	£30,044,575	£94,919,953	Less than 1 year

The methodology is set out in Appendix B and includes a clarification as to what is and isn't covered for the purposes of an options analysis. There are some considerations for the full financial case that have not been included at this stage including potential impact of the Fair Funding Review 2.0 which is currently in live consultation.

Financial Modelling: Planning of costs and benefits

The table below provides an overview of the phasing of benefits, transition costs and disaggregation costs which have been tested with the s151 officers.

Impact of Phasing

In modelling the impact of costs and benefits, assumptions have been made to reflect their realistic phasing. This ensures that one-off costs are spread over multiple years rather than being incurred immediately, alongside the ongoing costs of transition.

Benefits are phased over a 3 year period, recognising that some efficiencies - such as senior leadership reductions - can be realised quickly, while others, like contract realignment and third-party spend savings, will take longer to achieve. This approach accounts for operational complexities, contract obligations, and the time required for full implementation.

It is important to note that the benefits outlined here relate solely to system aggregation, rather than service transformation. The efficiencies modelled do not include potential improvements from broader service redesign, which would be considered separately.

The phasing of the annualised **benefits** is over three years, due to the varying timescales for different aspects of delivery, after 3 years the full annual benefit is assumed. This includes ongoing cost reduction programs, the timing of the next election, and the expiry of third-party contracts. Transformation benefits have not been included.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4 -10
Benefits *(cumulative)*	30%	50%	100%	100%
Transition Costs *(one-off)*	30%	30%	30%	10%
Disaggregation Costs	*No disaggregation cost*			

Transition costs are spread over a longer period rather than being completed within a single year, ensuring a more realistic and feasible approach. Costs are incurred over three years, with Years 2 and 3 primarily covering recontracting, system migrations, workforce adjustments, and other transition-related expenditures. This phased approach accounts for contractual constraints, the complexity of workforce changes, and the time required to reorganise services, reducing financial risk and operational disruption.

Disaggregation costs arise from splitting county services into new councils, leading to ongoing expenses for duplicated leadership and operations but excluding service delivery costs.

7. Implementation

Implementation: indicative timeframe to implementation

This section outlines key timescales, activities, and opportunities in Local Government Reorganisation. The following pages set out some of the required steps to developing a full business case proposal for submission in November and some of the post-decision implementation activities.

Proposal *Submitted*	Decision	Phase 1: Mobilisation	Phase 2: Transition	Phase 3: Transformation
The submission of a proposal to MHCLG in March 2025 signaled the start of this process. Note that there may be multiple proposals for an area, and coherence with the MHCLG criteria will be a significant factor in the next stages.	The period between March and November requires dedicated governance, time and resource to develop detailed plans for implementation, including financial and legal matters. This will require coordination and collaboration across all nine councils.	Once a decision is made, resources must be mobilised and implementation plans put into effect to deliver the complex task of dissolving existing bodies and creating a new local authority in an effective and legal manner.		

An Implementation Executive is likely to be required by statute, consisting of representatives existing local government areas which will form the new unitary authority. This will generally include the leader of the City, County and District Councils concerned.

21 March 2025

We are here

28 November 2025

Vesting Day
1 April 2028 (TBC)

Implementation: Development of the final proposal (1/4)

A significant range of activities will need to be completed prior to final submission of the proposal in November 2025. This includes stakeholder engagement, legal, financial and organisational development activity, which will require specific capabilities and dedicated capacity.The immediate next step is for Chief Executives and Members to take a decision on which option(s) to take forward to develop into a full business case.

Interim Plan:
by 21st March 2025
Submitted

An interim was submitted to MHCLG on 21st March 2025:

- This plan outlined the proposed options under consideration and how they are likely to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks.
- More detailed analysis and engagement needs to take place post this submission to refine the options and develop a full business case.
- Engagement will also need to take place with EMCCA, local MPs, parish councils and wider system partners such as police and fire services and the ICS. During this period an engagement and consultation plan needs to be developed in order to gather input and assess support for proposals.

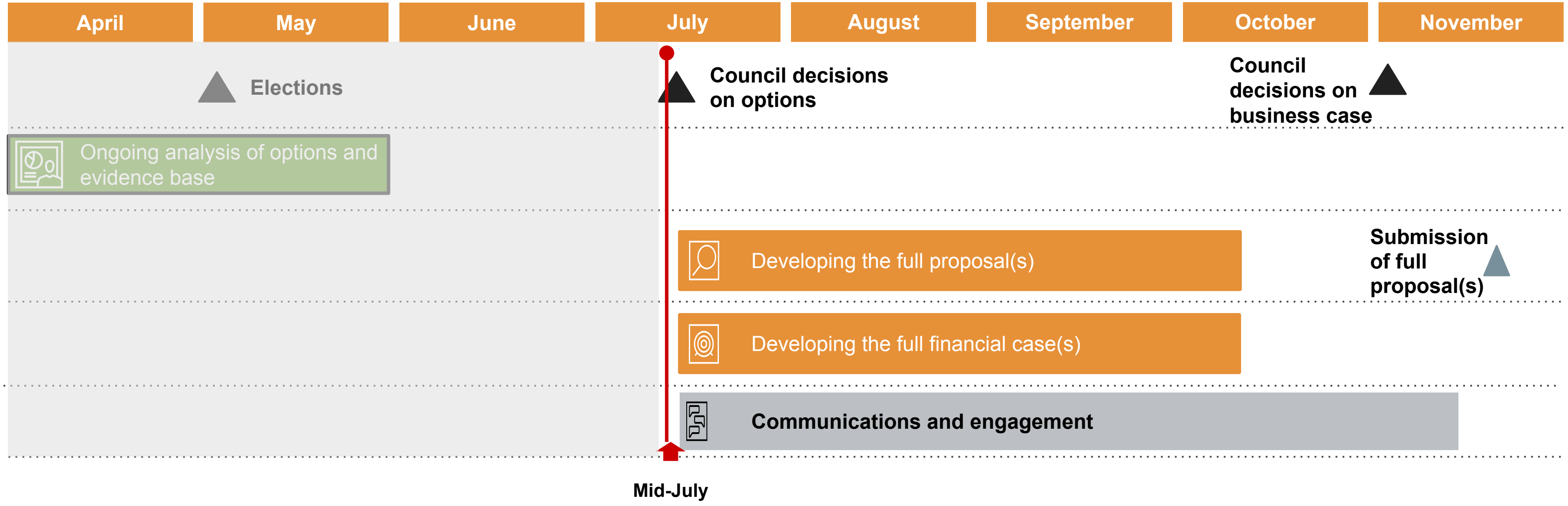
Final proposal:
by 28th November 2025

Based on feedback from the interim plan, Nottingham & Nottinghamshire will need to refine their proposals to ensure they have met all the criteria set out by the MHCLG, including (indicative not exhaustive):

- Agreeing the resources which each council will commit to funding the process.
- A need to prepare for implementation of the new interim structures, including planning for any necessary changes to governance, staffing and service delivery
- Appointment of a responsible officer and cabinet member in each council. The members will form a LGR committee which may transition to be a shadow unitary council executive as vesting day approaches.
- Design the appropriate directorate and senior leadership structure for the new authority
- Finalise arrangements for HR changes and staff redundancy, including any provision for a voluntary scheme, and how this cost will be impact existing councils
- Determine a plan for disbursement of debt and reserves in consultation with joint S151 officers
- Agree and undertake a joint plan for consulting the public with Districts.
- Agree and undertake a joint plan for consulting staff, including engagement with Trades Unions.
- Agree an approach to harmonising council tax across Districts, including how Council Tax Relief will be harmonised
- Conduct equality impact assessments of proposed arrangements
- Plan for the costs and legal aspects of winding up existing authorities and creating a new statutory entity
- Understand the risks and implications of existing assets, liabilities and HRA provision.

Implementation: Development of the final proposal (2/4)

Set out below is a very high level view of the remaining timeframe available for decision making and development of a full proposal ready to be submitted in November 2025.



Implementation: Development of the final proposal (3/4)

An overview of how the options analysis would need to develop into a full proposal is set out below and on the following page.

1 Refining the options appraisal

- Since submission in March, the Options Analysis has been narrowed down to three options: Option 1(b), Option 1(e) and Option 2.
- Deep dives have been conducted against MHCLG criterion such as sensible economic area, sensible geography and crucial services.
- The financial analysis has been updated.

2 Developing the full proposal

- The stated intention is to develop a single proposal, working collaboratively. The points set out below would need to be developed in any full business case proposal.
- A vision for the new council(s), including the improved outcomes expected to be delivered for people and the place.
- Design of a high level target operating model for the new council(s); including customer offer, ways of working, culture and values, how technology and information will be utilised etc. and describing what residents will experience.
- Identifying opportunities for service synergies - consolidation of existing functions, simplification of processes and opportunities arising from bringing district and county together (e.g. housing and social care), as well as district and existing unitary functions together.
- Designing the arrangements that will be put in place at a locality level to build engagement and ensure the new councils are responsive locally.
- Clarify the democratic structures that will be put in place - e.g. structures and numbers of councillors, key milestones and decision points.
- Determining how the new council(s) will work with EMCCA
- Describing how the the new councils will work towards more ambitious public service reform, working with other providers in the geography.
- Determining how any new council(s) will work together to share certain functions.
- Developing an implementation roadmap, which will identify the target and interim states for the new council(s).

3 Developing the financial case

- Identifying the costs and benefits associated with the implementation of unitary local government across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, taking more precise account of data concerning:
  - the establishments of all impacted councils;
  - assets and liabilities (including physical assets, reserves, debt and MRP); contracting and other partnership arrangements; IT architecture; grant funding and additional income; and Council Tax implications.
- Developing the investment and benefit profiles that will drive implementation.
- Developing the investment strategy required to fund implementation.

Implementation: Development of the final proposal (4/4)

Due diligence 4

- While the work described under workstream 2 would not entail due diligence (e.g. line by line reviews of all contract and commissioning arrangements, review of assets, liabilities, IT infrastructure etc.), it is anticipated that work of this nature will commence in the period leading up to the November submission.

Communi-cation and engagement 5

- Developing a comprehensive communications strategy to support the development and submission of proposals. This would include a focus on:
  - staff engagement (sharing communication assets across all of the impacted councils);
  - member engagement, including the provision of members to come together for visioning workshops and design discussions;
  - stakeholder engagement - working with MPs, the town and parish councils, as well as public, private and voluntary sector partners to discuss and explain the changes being proposed; and
  - community and public engagement - focus groups, engagement meetings and other forms of communication.
- Consolidating the responses and views gathered during this activity to inform the development of the November submission and evidence support and / or opposition to the establishment of the new council(s).

Mobilising programme workstreams 6

- There is a commitment to deliver an ambitious transformation programme in parallel with the transition to the new council(s). To this end, work is intended to commence in the following areas:
  - service design;
  - consideration of technology requirements;
  - HR - approach to change management, migration of staff to the new council(s);
  - OD - foundational work on culture, behaviours, values and ways of working;
  - branding and buildings; and
  - legal and governance arrangements (including the Structural Change Order, shadow governance arrangements and senior appointments).

Implementation: implementation roadmap

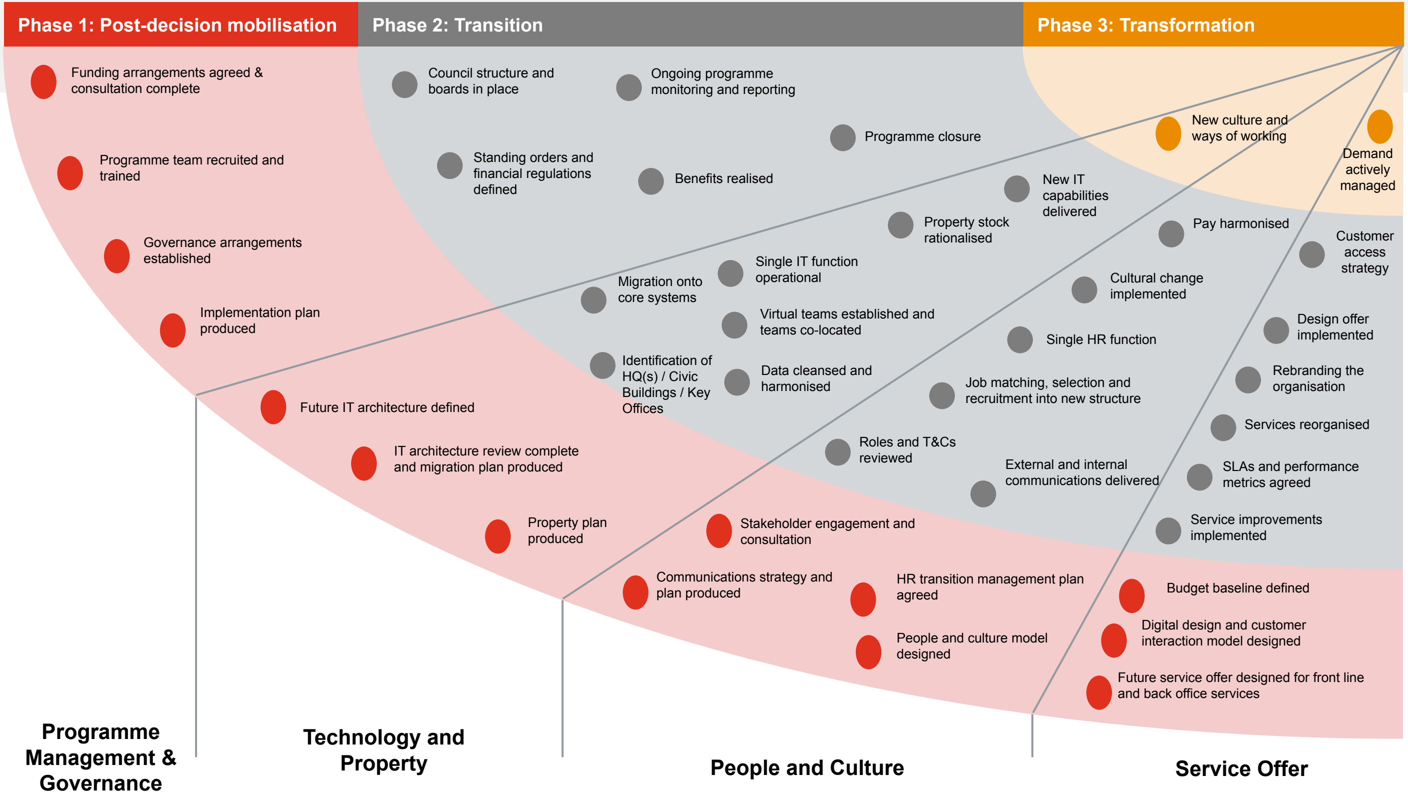
Phase 1: Mobilisation

Phase 2: Transition

Phase 3: Transformation

Detailed implementation plans will be developed during the mobilisation phase outlined above and in the diagram. This implementation map provides an overview for the key activities which will need to be undertaken by officers and members as vesting day approaches, and which will need to be accomplished alongside business-as-usual in terms of service delivery.

The financial model includes a high level estimate that **c. £13m** will be required for internal and external support for the process under Option 1(b) and 1(e). This is consistent (and a conservative estimate at this stage) with previous rounds of LGR.



Implementation: Immediate next steps and planning

Immediate next steps is for Chief Executives and Members to take a decision on which option(s) to take forward to develop into a full business case in July 2025 and begin planning for implementation including early scoping on programme support and workstreams (outlined below).

Immediate next steps

- Summary report shared with CEXs
- Confirm LGR Meeting date to take decision on which option to take forward
- Decision on the options analysis and potentially a preferred option.
- Agree coordination and collaboration arrangements where required

Immediate next steps for programme infrastructure set up (not exhaustive)

- Agree resources to coordinate efforts across all councils
- Agree leadership, governance and oversight arrangements
- Identify and establish officer working groups for relevant projects and programmes
- Work with workstream leads to identify the key tasks for each group, secure the appropriate membership and to ensure time and resources are protected to meet the time pressures.
- Agree a stakeholder and engagement plan

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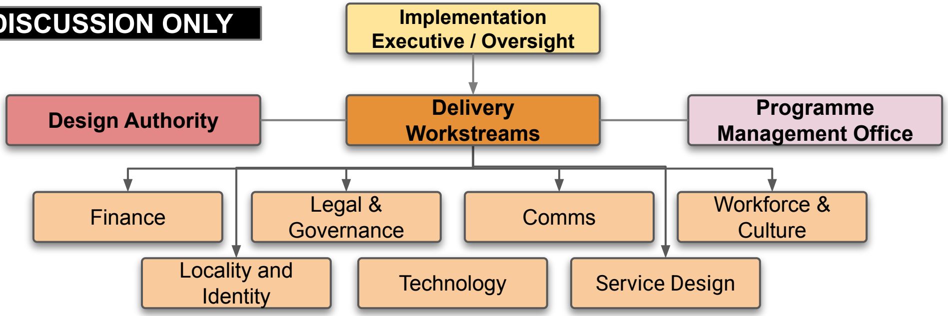


Governance	Description
Implementation Executive	• Likely to be required by statute, consisting of representatives existing local government areas which will form the new unitary authority. This will generally include the leader of the City, County and District Councils concerned, Chief Execs and s151 officers. • Responsible for overall strategic direction, oversight of risk, and benefit realisation and meets monthly, or more frequently during critical periods
Delivery Workstreams	• Example workstreams outlined above; each chaired by a Senior Director (from pool of affected councils) with delegated authority, and reports progress, risks, issues and resource needs to the Implementation Executive
Programme Management Office	• Centralised function for planning, reporting, dependency and risk management across all workstreams and driving interface with other enablers (Finance, ICT, Legal, Procurement), ensuring a "single version of truth" through common tools, templates and reporting standards
Design Authority	• Technical group reviewing service design, TOM alignment and systems integration to ensure joined-up thinking

8. Appendix A: Criteria Analysis

Criteria Analyses (1/2)

The table provides details on the information which was included in the additional analysis.

Title	Prepared by	Date	Description	Conclusion
'Sensible Economic Areas' for Local Government Reorganisation in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	Council officers across the nine Nottingham Nottinghamshire authorities.	23/05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of travel to work, economic self-containment, housing market areas and service market for consumers for the three options.	Concludes that the differences in degree of fit are too narrow to be able to identify a clear better fit, though Option 1(e) marginally (< 1 percent) provides a stronger fit with the Travel to Work Area (TTWA) and the Housing Market Area (HMA).
Assessment of proposed options for unitary local government in Nottinghamshire in terms of increasing housing supply and meeting local needs	This report has been prepared in conjunction with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Heads of Planning and has been shared with officers of the East Midlands Combined County Authority.	07/05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of impact on potential to increase long term housing supply, impact on transition to system of a Spatial Development Strategy & Local Plans, impact on meeting local housing needs and impact on other issues such as mineral and wasting planning.	Concludes that Option 1(b) may not accelerate housing supply in the same way that Option 1(e) might, with 1(e) potentially having a wider mix of housing supply sources and reflecting existing joint workings on GNSP.
Assessment of potential options for unitary local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in context of Adult Social Care services	Council officers across the nine Nottingham Nottinghamshire authorities.	05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire along with the opportunities, risk, service delivery impacts and data analysis of the three options.	Option 1(b) is the preferred option due to its alignment with geographic and demographic characteristics of Nottingham City. Broxtowe and Gedling are better integrated with the city's infrastructure and facilities.

Criteria Analyses (2/2)

The table provides details on the information which was included in the additional analysis.

Title	Prepared by	Date	Description	Conclusion
Assessment of potential options for unitary local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in context of Homelessness	The document has been developed by a core group of lead officers representing the local authorities with the support and consultation of a wider cohort of officers from each district, borough, City and also the County Council.	05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire along with the opportunities, risk, service delivery impacts and data analysis of the three options.	The analysis does not identify a preferred option. Under both Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) there could be reduced homelessness impact due to changes in administrative boundaries and service configurations.
Assessment of potential options for unitary local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in context of Children's SEND services	Council officers across the nine Nottingham Nottinghamshire authorities.	05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of SEND services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire along with the opportunities, risk, service delivery impacts and data analysis of the three options.	Option 1(b) is the preferred option as it best aligns with the goals of local government reorganisation, offering a balanced distribution of demand and service delivery for SEND and not posing challenges to the reallocation of resources, workforce, or caseloads.
Assessment of potential options for unitary local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in context of Children's Social Care services	Council officers across the nine Nottingham Nottinghamshire authorities.	05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of Children's Social Care Services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire along with the opportunities, risk, service delivery impacts and data analysis of the three options.	Option 1(b) is the preferred option as Broxtowe and Gedling more closely align to Nottingham City in terms of levels and types of safeguarding needs, which would allow for more targeted / focused service delivery models to be deployed.

9. Appendix B: Financial Assumptions

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Staff) (1 of 2)

Element of the model

Staff
- Senior leadership
- Front office FTE
- District service delivery FTE
- Back office FTE

Methodology

1 The combined County and District Councils spend on staff has been estimated, and grouped into front office, service delivery, and back office spend based on local authority averages.

2 Percentage reductions have been applied to front office, district service delivery and back office full-time equivalent (FTE). These reflect the efficiencies gained from removing duplicated activity.

3 These percentage reductions are higher for a single unitary authority and revised down for a two unitary authority model due to forgone economies of scale.

4 An additional benefit has been calculated from removed District senior leadership posts, including on-costs.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Proportion of net revenue expenditure spent on staff	31.3%		Calculated through publicly available RO forms.
Front Office FTE	36%		
Service Delivery FTE	37%		Percentage reductions in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.
Back Office FTE	27%		

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Staff) (2 of 2)

Element of the model

Staff
- Senior leadership
- Front office FTE
- District service delivery FTE
- Back office FTE

Methodology

1 The combined County and District Councils spend on staff has been estimated, and grouped into front office, service delivery, and back office spend based on local authority averages.

2 Percentage reductions have been applied to front office, district service delivery and back office full-time equivalent (FTE). These reflect the efficiencies gained from removing duplicated activity.

3 These percentage reductions are higher for a single unitary authority and revised down for a two unitary authority model due to forgone economies of scale.

4 An additional benefit has been calculated from removed District senior leadership posts, including on-costs.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Reduction in front office FTE	4%		
Reduction in service delivery FTE	1.5%		Percentage reductions in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.
Reduction in back-office FTE	3%		
Senior leadership costs in Districts	£8,681,498		Senior leadership costs calculated for the top three tiers of leadership of District Councils including on-costs based on averages and no of Districts. Lower tiers are not included as they may be required as part of new organisational structures.

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Third Party Spend)

Element of the model

Third party spend

Non-addressable

Addressable

Methodology

1. The addressable third party spend combined between County and District Councils has been calculated using proportioned net expenditure to provide a baseline. Third party spend relating to property has been excluded.
2. A percentage reduction in third party spend has been applied due to the greater purchasing economies of scale that will be gained through consolidation.
3. These percentage reductions are higher for a single unitary authority and revised down for a two unitary authority model due to forgone economies of scale.

Assumptions applied

<table>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Area</th><th colspan="2">Key figures</th><th rowspan="2">Rationale</th></tr>
<tr><th>Options 1b & 1e</th><th>Option 2 - City and County Council</th></tr>
<tr><td>Proportion of net expenditure spent on third parties</td><td colspan="2">65.7%</td><td>Calculated through publicly available RO forms.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Proportion of third party spend (TPS) which is addressable</td><td colspan="2">75%</td><td>75% of the total third party spend is treated as addressable, due to some elements of third party spend being non addressable, eg. pass through costs. Previous experience in local authority third party spend analysis suggests that this typically makes up 25% of the spend</td></tr>
<tr><td>Reduction in third party spend</td><td colspan="2">1.5%</td><td>Percentage reductions in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.</td></tr>
</table>

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Property)

Element of the model

Property

Methodology

1 The combined net expenditure on property has been calculated using net expenditure figures for the County and District Councils.

2 This is spend relating to the ongoing running costs of office spaces such as those used in energy, cleaning and routine repairs rather than from the one-off sale of rationalised council office space. In addition, any benefits resulting from the rental of available office space has been excluded.

3 A percentage reduction has been applied to the property baseline to provide the estimate property benefit.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Proportion of net expenditure spent on property	3%		Proportion of spend is based on RO calculations. Percentage reductions in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.
Reduction in property spend	12.5%		

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Democracy)

Element of the model

Democracy

Councillor allowances

Elections

Methodology

1 By aggregating Districts into one or two unitary authorities, fewer councillors will be required and therefore a saving can be made from base and special responsibility allowances. The average cost of a District council democratic structure has been estimated and multiplied by the number of District councils present within the boundary.

2 Consolidating local authorities will also reduce the number of elections required, thus presenting a benefit. The average annual cost of a District election has been calculated and multiplied by the number of District councils.

3 The calculation for both the single and two unitary model is the same, as the two unitary model also incurs an additional disaggregation cost of duplicating a larger, more expensive councillor structure than in District councils.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
District SRA and base allowances incurred as part of the democratic structure	£351,915		Calculated through publicly available data.
Annual cost incurred per District election	£165,530		The annual cost of a District election has been calculated by multiplying the cost per vote and the average voter turnout during representative District Council elections. This has been divided by 4 to estimate the annual saving that can be achieved per council, and multiplied by the number of District councils inputted.
Cost per vote during an election	£3.00		The cost per vote used to calculate the cost of an election has been estimated at £3 by Government / Electoral Commission based on previous election data.

Key assumptions: Aggregation and Disaggregation costs (1 of 2)

Element of the model

Duplication
- Duplicated senior leadership
- Duplicating service delivery management
- Duplicated democratic structures

Methodology

1. The following costs of disaggregation only apply in the two unitary authority scenario. Two sets of senior leadership will be required to run two distinct authorities. This cost has been calculated using the costs of senior leadership at a representative council to tier three.
2. By disaggregating services that are currently county wide, for example Adults and Children's services, additional FTE will be required to account for lost efficiency. The amount of effort used in service delivery management & supervision has been used as a proxy to estimate the size of the increase required in a two unitary model.
3. The cost of a representative county democratic structure has been estimated as an additional cost incurred having two unitary authorities

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Proportion of additional FTE undertaking service delivery management & supervision	0%		Additional costs have not been applied.
Additional senior leadership costs	0%		There is no additional cost as there are two senior leadership teams across existing top tier authorities
Members in upper tier local authorities	121		The existing number of top tier authority councillors across the area has been applied as an estimate and for the purpose for this financial analysis. Note: This does not represent a decision on the future number of Councillors.

Key assumptions: Aggregation and Disaggregation costs (2 of 2)

Element of the model

Duplication

Duplicated senior leadership

Duplicating county service delivery

Duplicated democratic structures

Methodology

1 The following costs of disaggregation only apply in the two unitary authority scenario. Two sets of senior leadership will be required to run two distinct authorities. This cost has been calculated using the costs of senior leadership at a representative council to tier three.

2 By disaggregating services that are currently county wide, for example Adults and Children's services, additional FTE will be required to account for lost efficiency. The amount of effort used in service delivery management & supervision has been used as a proxy to estimate the size of the increase required in a two unitary model.

3 The cost of a representative county democratic structure has been estimated as an additional cost incurred having two unitary authorities

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Member base allowance	£1,088,297		Calculated through publicly available data.
SRA costs per new unitary authority	£0		Two top tier unitary authorities already exist - there is no additional requirement based on the options currently under consideration.

Key assumptions: Costs of transition (1 of 4)

Element of the model

Transition Costs
- Redundancy costs
- Programme transition costs

Methodology

1 One off redundancy costs will be incurred when re-organising local authorities. These have been calculated as a proportion of the benefit resulting from FTE reductions and therefore is higher in a single unitary model than a two unitary model.

2 There are a number of transition costs that will be incurred when closing down existing local authorities and creating new authorities. In transitioning to a single unitary authority, these costs will only be incurred once, whereas in a two unitary model, many of these costs will be incurred twice.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Redundancy cost as a proportion of salary	30%		Percentage estimate in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.
External communications, rebranding and implementation	£732,000	£366,000	Estimates in line with previous local government reorganisation work. For 1b & 1e x2 multiplier has been used.
External transition, design and implementation support costs	£8,540,000	£4,270,000	

Key assumptions: Costs of transition (2 of 4)

Element of the model

Transition Costs

- Redundancy costs
- Programme transition costs

Methodology

1 One off redundancy costs will be incurred when re-organising local authorities. These have been calculated as a proportion of the benefit resulting from FTE reductions and therefore is higher in a single unitary model than a two unitary model.

2 There are a number of transition costs that will be incurred when closing down existing local authorities and creating new authorities. In transitioning to a single unitary authority, these costs will only be incurred once, whereas in a two unitary model, many of these costs will be incurred twice.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Additional programme management costs of disaggregating services	£0		No disaggregation cost as a result of not breaking up the county. There is a potential change of service delivery by one UA, which may delivered by another UA in future.
Internal programme management	£3,806,400	£1,903,200	Estimates in line with previous local government reorganisation work. For 1b & 1e x2 multiplier has been used.
Creating the new council	£1,220,000	£610,000	

Key assumptions: Costs of transition (3 of 4)

Element of the model

Transition Costs

- Redundancy costs
- Programme transition costs

Methodology

1 One off redundancy costs will be incurred when re-organising local authorities. These have been calculated as a proportion of the benefit resulting from FTE reductions and therefore is higher in a single unitary model than a two unitary model.

2 There are a number of transition costs that will be incurred when closing down existing local authorities and creating new authorities. In transitioning to a single unitary authority, these costs will only be incurred once, whereas in a two unitary model, many of these costs will be incurred twice.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Contingency	£6,775,853		Estimates in line with previous local government reorganisation work. For 1b & 1e x2 multiplier has been used.
Organisation Closedown	£305,000		
Public consultation	£411,750	£274,500	

Key assumptions: Costs of transition (4 of 4)

Element of the model

Transition Costs

- Redundancy costs
- Programme transition costs

Methodology

1 One off redundancy costs will be incurred when re-organising local authorities. These have been calculated as a proportion of the benefit resulting from FTE reductions and therefore is higher in a single unitary model than a two unitary model.

2 There are a number of transition costs that will be incurred when closing down existing local authorities and creating new authorities. In transitioning to a single unitary authority, these costs will only be incurred once, whereas in a two unitary model, many of these costs will be incurred twice.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Information, Communication & Technology (ICT) costs	£2,385,000		Estimates in line with previous local government reorganisation work. For 1b & 1e x2 multiplier has been used.
Shadow Chief Exec/ Member costs	£622,200	£311,100	

10. Appendix C: Comparative Analysis

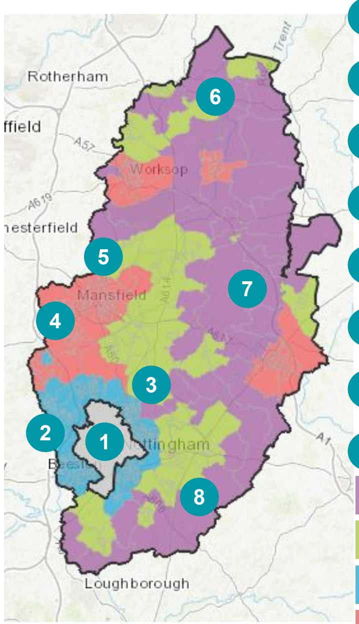
Summary view of comparative analysis for the three options

		Rural / urban	Time to key services	Debt to reserve per capita ratio	Social care demand to council tax take (current)	Social care demand to council tax take (projected)	Population	Deprivation	Housing need	Business Growth	Healthcare provision
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	34.4%	3.5	53.5	0.94	0.94	603,185	26.5	19.6	See detail on page 104	7,101
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs			14.0	0.84	0.87	661,460	20.7	17.2		8,281
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	18.3%	1.7	47.4	0.87	0.87	611,518	24.7	20.5	See detail on page 104	6,906
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs			14.7	0.90	0.92	653,127	22.3	16.3		8,556
2	Nottingham City remains the same	30.4%	3.9	83.9	1.18	1.12	352,463	34.9	19.9	See detail on page 104	6,456
	Rest of Nottinghamshire becomes a new unitary authority			14.2	0.81	0.83	912,182	19.0	17.7		8,279

Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (current)

The table below sets out the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography and how this is reflected when combined in the different LGR options that are under consideration.



1. Nottingham
2. Broxtowe
3. Gedling
4. Ashfield
5. Mansfield
6. Bassetlaw
7. Newark and Sherwood
8. Rushcliffe

- Rural Village
- Rural Town & Fringe
- Urban Minor Conurbation
- Urban City & Town

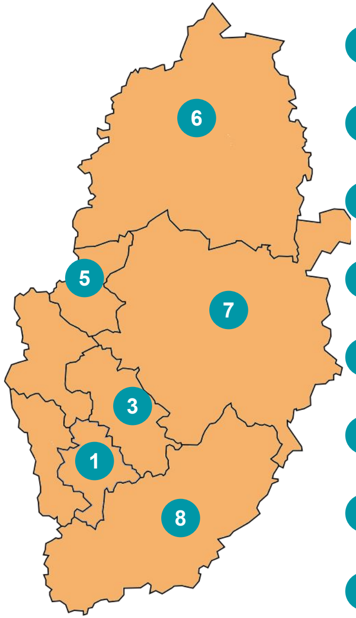
Average proportion of rural population
[Department for Rural Affairs - Rural Urban Classification Map - Nottingham Observatory]

Option		Rural %	Urban %	Difference between %'s
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	3.9%	96.1%	34.4%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	38.3%	61.7%	
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	12.4%	87.6%	18.3%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	30.7%	69.3%	
2	Nottingham City	0.0%	100.0%	30.4%
	Nottinghamshire	30.4%	69.6%	

Key: Options that are most alike in rural / urban — Options that are least alike in rural / urban

Analysis: Time to key services analysis

This table highlights which of the potential options are the most equitable in time taken to travel to key services e.g. employment centres, primary schools, secondary schools, further education, GPs, hospitals, food retail and town centres.



1 Nottingham
2 Broxtowe
3 Gedling
4 Ashfield
5 Mansfield
6 Bassetlaw
7 Newark and Sherwood
8 Rushcliffe

Option		Time to key services via public transport / walking (min)	Difference between options (mins)
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	14.6	3.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	18.1	
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	15.5	1.7
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	17.3	
2	Nottingham City	13.6	3.9
	Nottinghamshire	17.5	

Source: *[Average time to key services (Public Transport/ Walking) Department of Transport Journey Time Statistics]*

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis

Set out below are key components that underpin the debt-to-reserve per capita ratio analysis, as a potential indicator of relative financial health for each option.

Option		# of People (2023)	Total Debt (£000s, 24/25)	Total Reserves - (£000s, 23/24)	Debt per capita (£)	Reserves per capita (£)	Debt/Reserves per capita Ratio
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	£ 857,060	£ 16,029	£ 1,528	£ 29	53.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	£ 792,540	£ 56,611	£ 1,293	£ 92	14.0
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	£ 846,248	£ 17,867	£ 1,494	£ 32	47.4
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	£ 803,352	£ 54,773	£ 1,322	£ 90	14.7
2	Nottingham City	329,276	£ 744,626	£ 8,877	£ 2,261	£ 27	83.9
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	£ 904,974	£ 63,763	£ 1,072	£ 76	14.2

Sources:
[1] Borrowing and Investment Live Tables. Q2 2024-25:
[2] ONS Estimates of the Population for England and Wales Mid-2023
[3] Revenue outturn summary 2023-2024

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Social Care demand to Council Tax take (current)

The analysis set out below below compares 2024/25 adult's and children's social care actual spend to council tax receipts in 2023/24 to gauge the potential strain on public services.

Option		Total ASC Spend (2024/25)	Total CSC Spend (2024/25)	Total Care Spend (2024/25)	Council Tax Receipts (2023/24)	Care to Council Tax Receipt Ratio
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	£ 164,626,206	£ 134,262,020	£ 298,888,226	£ 317,184,000	0.94
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 206,418,792	£ 154,068,977	£ 360,487,769	£ 427,317,000	0.84
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	£ 160,376,612	£ 132,493,533	£ 292,870,145	£ 335,799,000	0.87
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 210,668,386	£ 155,837,464	£ 366,505,850	£ 408,702,000	0.90
2	Nottingham City	£ 92,476,000	£ 90,513,000	£ 182,989,000	£ 154,566,000	1.18
	Nottinghamshire	£ 278,568,998	£ 197,817,997	£ 476,386,995	£ 589,935,000	0.81

Sources:
[1] Nottingham City Council Budget Monitoring Report FY24/25; *[3] Council Tax*
[2] Nottinghamshire County Council revenue budget statement FY24/25

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Social Care demand to Council Tax take (projected)

The analysis set out below below compares projected adult's and children's social care actual spend to projected council tax receipts to gauge the potential strain on public services.

Option		Total ASC Spend (2032/33)	Total CSC Spend (2032/33)	Total Care Spend (2032/33)	Council Tax Receipts (2032/33)	Care to Council Tax Receipt Ratio
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	£ 177,007,122	£ 160,455,544	£ 337,462,666	£ 359,340,174	0.94
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 224,778,121	£ 184,126,692	£ 408,904,812	£ 470,435,575	0.87
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	£ 173,402,244	£ 158,342,037	£ 331,744,281	£ 380,332,467	0.87
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 228,382,999	£ 186,240,198	£ 414,623,197	£ 449,735,749	0.92
2	Nottingham City	£ 99,549,687	£ 108,171,414	£ 207,721,100	£ 186,281,960	1.12
	Nottinghamshire	£ 302,235,556	£ 236,410,822	£ 538,646,378	£ 647,928,338	0.83

Sources:
[1] 2024 England Taxbase - Taxbase data
[2] Tax Rate - Band D Council Tax Figures
[3] Nottingham City Council Budget Monitoring Report FY24/25;
[4] Nottinghamshire County Council revenue budget statement FY24/2

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Population

The table below compares current and forecasted population estimates for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire across the different options under consideration.

Option		Population (2023)	Population (2035)
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	603,185
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	661,460
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	611,518
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	653,127
2	Nottingham City	329,276	352,463
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	912,182

Sources:
[1] ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales Mid-2023

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Deprivation

This table summarises the key findings from analysis of the indices of deprivation, highlighting the areas of greatest need.

Option		Average deprivation score
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	26.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	20.7
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	24.7
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	22.3
2	Nottingham City	34.9
	Nottinghamshire	19.0

Sources:
[1] English indices of deprivation 2019

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Housing Need

This table summarises the findings from the housing need analysis, identifying which option will see a greatest difference in the number of homes per 1000 of the population.

Option		Population (current)	Forecast new homes (2022-2027)	Forecast new homes needed per 1000 people (2022-2027)
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	11,000	19.6
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	10,510	17.2
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	11,625	20.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	9,885	16.3
2	Nottingham City*	329,276	6,565	19.9
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	14,945	17.7

**Nottingham City figures reflect base need values. It excludes a 35% uplift.*

Sources:
[1] Assessment of Housing Need and Capacity in Nottingham City, Dec 2022
[2] Nottinghamshire County Council: Draft Housing Strategy 2023-2028

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Business Growth

The analysis sets out which would be the three largest areas of potential growth across each of the options based upon Gross Value Added (GVA) figures, coupled with the UK GDP growth seen over the last five years. This is intended to give an indication of which options might be able to grow economies and where that might be more challenging.There are new opportunities - such as the freeport - which are not yet captured in this data.

Option		Largest Sector		2nd largest		3rd largest	
		Sector	%	Sector	%	Sector	%
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.2%	Education	11.5%	Healthcare & Social Work	10.8%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	14.5%	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.7%	Real Estate	11.2%
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.6%	Education	11.2%	Professional services	10.1%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	16.3%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.5%	Real Estate	11.6%
1g	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	17.9%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.0%	Real Estate	10.9%
2	Nottingham City	Education	13.7%	Healthcare & Social Work	12.4%	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.8%
	Nottinghamshire	Manufacturing	16.0%	Real Estate	12.1%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.0%

Sector	UK GDP growth rates over last 2020-24 (5 years)
Healthcare & Social Work	34.5%
Education	34.1%
Professional services	26.3%
Wholesale & Retail trade	12.8%
Real Estate	3.3%
Manufacturing	-3.6%

While historical GDP growth rates may provide indications of future sectoral resilience, actual future economic performance may diverge due to various factors. This includes potential local growth drivers, such as the development of the East Midlands Freeport, Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) programme and interventions from the strategic authority (EMCCA), could influence sectoral vulnerability and economic prospects.

Options with least vulnerable sectors

Analysis: Healthcare Provision

Set out below is a summary of the population numbers served per GP surgery in each of the options under consideration.

Option		Population (2023)	Number of GP surgeries (February 2025)	Number of people served per GP surgery
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	79	7,101
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	74	8,281
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	82	6,906
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	71	8,556
2	Nottingham City	329,276	51	6,456
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	102	8,279

Sources:
[1] ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales Mid-2023
[2] ONS Number of GP surgeries in local areas, England and Wales
[3] ONS Number of GPs per local areas, England and Wales

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Rushcliffe
Borough Council

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Options Appraisal

Potential three-unitary model

14th July 2025

RUSHCLIFFE - GREAT PLACE ▪ GREAT LIFESTYLE ▪ GREAT SPORT

Report contents

Rushcliffe
Borough Council

1. Purpose and approach



Scope of work: Phase 1 and potential Phase 2

An options appraisal, focussed on a three-unitary model and summarised in this report, has been completed to enable the leadership of Rushcliffe Borough Council to determine whether to proceed to the development of a full business case for submission to Government.

Decision point

4 weeks

Phase 1: Options appraisal and report

- Objective, evidence-based approach to analysis of a potential 3-unitary option for local government reorganisation (LGR) in Nottinghamshire, in comparison to alternative options already being assessed.
- Use publicly available data sources and structure in line with Government criteria set out in the letter dated 6th February 2025.
- Top-down financial model, including estimated payback period for two and three-unitary models.
- Engagement with key public sector partners to gather and assess views on the preferred model for LGR.

Estimated 16 weeks

Phase 2: Full business case (depending on decision)

- Collaborative storyboarding, drafting, development and refinement of proposal content, including structured review sessions with key stakeholders.
- Support to develop vision and outcomes to be delivered through LGR, considering topics such as locality working and public service reform.
- Development and drafting of a more detailed, bottom-up financial model for the preferred option.
- Implementation plan to deliver against the Government timeline.

Summary of approach to options analysis

A summary of the approach taken to complete this options evaluation exercise are set out below.

Each step has a supporting page with additional detail.

1

Options in scope for analysis

The three unitary model which is the focus of this options appraisal was selected through an analysis of key data sets (see Appendix)

This three unitary model has been compared to the three two-unitary options in scope of the Nottinghamshire-wide analysis already ongoing (2A, 2B, 2C).

2

Key baseline data sets gathered

Gathered **publicly available data** sources across the current authorities (step 2.1)

Using an Excel model, calculate combined figures for proposed future unitary authorities (step 2.2)

3

Evaluation criteria developed

Using Government guidance against the six headline criteria, developed a set of 14 criteria for options to be scored against.

Note: **no weighting** has been applied to these criteria at this point.

4

Metrics identified and assessed against each criteria

For each evaluation criteria, identified a series of metrics to provide a basis for differentiating between the merits of each option. For each metric, a statement of 'What does good look like and why?" has been set to guide the evaluation of options (see Appendix 2).

5

Scoring of options against criteria

Use evaluation of metrics for all options to arrive at a red, amber or green score for each criteria.

Commentary has been gathered alongside scoring.

Rushcliffe
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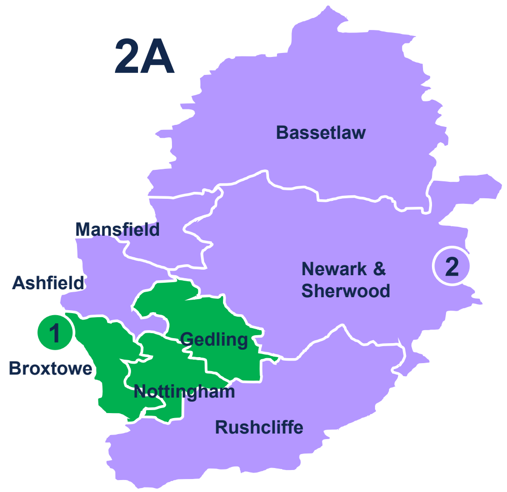
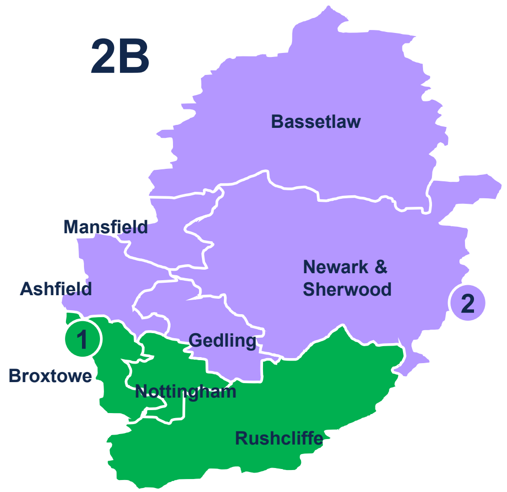
Step 1: Options in scope for analysis

Options being analysed in analysis being performed on behalf of all nine authorities



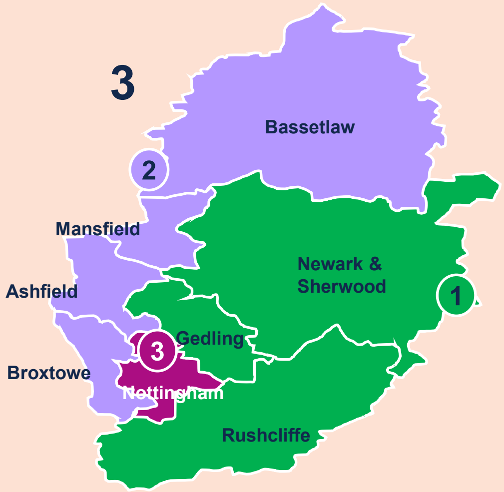
	1	2
Population	561,011	612,759
GVA per Capita (£)	27,957	22,428



	1	2
Population	566,302	607,468
GVA per Capita (£)	30,817	19,712

	1	2
Population	329,276	844,494
GVA per Capita (£)	34,855	21,255

Core focus of this scope of work



	1	2	3
Population	368,585	475,909	329,276
GVA per Capita (£)	21,951	20,716	34,855

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Step 2.1: Key baseline data sets gathered

Publicly available data has been gathered to support the case. The table below shows baseline data across all current Council areas including total figures across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Councils. Please refer to the Appendix for all data sources.

Metric	Nottingham City (unitary)	District and Borough councils							Nottinghamshire County Council	Total / Average
		Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark and Sherwood	Rushcliffe		
Population (2023)	329,276	128,360	122,286	113,172	118,563	112,091	126,168	123,854	844,494	1,173,770
Geographic area (sq km) (2023)	74	109	639	80	119	76	651	409	2086	2,161
Population density (people per sqkm) (2023)	4,412	1,172	191	1,413	988	1,461	194	303	817	1,267
Total GVA (£ million) (2022)	11,477	2,895	2,608	2,478	1,729	1,878	2,865	3,497	17,950	29,427
GVA per capita (£) (2022)	34,855	22,554	21,327	21,896	14,583	16,754	22,708	28,235	21,151	22,864
65+ Population (2023)	38,732	25,553	27,217	24,711	25,917	22,139	28,823	27,034	181,394	220,126
Deprivation score (2019)	0.20	0.15	0.12	0.10	0.10	0.16	0.11	0.06	0.11	0.12
Homelessness Rate (per 1,000 Households) (Apr-Jun 2024)	3.38	1.16	1.22	0.34	0.74	1.28	0.45	1.10	0.90	1.21
Unemployment rates (%) (Oct 23-Sept 24)	6.58	4.79	4.19	3.98	3.79	4.67	3.34	2.55	3.90	4.24
Total Crime Rate per 1,000 Population (2024)	118.4	79.5	78.3	TBC	TBC	97.5	68.3	TBC	80.9	88.4
Housing Delivery Test Measurement (2023) (%)	115%	86%	354%	88%	109%	176%	188%	173%	168%	161%
Council tax base (number of band D equivalent properties) (2024)	71,062	34,682	39,238	35,568	39,664	31,290	42,720	47,769	270,934	42,749
Council Tax band D (average) (£) (2024-26)	2,656	2,562	2,567	2548	2482	2494	2626	2,394	2,525	2,541
Retained Business Rates (£m) (2024-25)	62.2	19.9	20.3	31.0	10.5	11.0	18.1	11.6		128.2
Non-Earmarked Reserves (£m) (2023-24)	17.6	27.4	2.5	6.1	13.5	15.5	32.7	2.6	327.3	445.2
Net revenue expenditure (£m) (2023/24)	231.4	15.3	15.3	11.1	12.3	13.4	21.3	14.5	590.9	924.9
Financing Costs (£m) (2023/24)	30.9	3.4	0.6	3.2	4.1	2.3	4.2	2.0	19.7	70.2
Financing Costs as % Net revenue expenditure (2023-24)	13%	22%	4%	29%	33%	17%	20%	13%	3%	7%

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Step 2.2: Key data sets: future unitary options

1 2 3 4 5

An Excel model has been used to calculate combined figures for proposed future unitary authorities. The table below shows the key data sets applied for each of the 6 identified options.

* Including County Council allocations

Metric	Option 2A		Option 2B		Option 2C		Option 3		
	Br,Ge,NC	As,Ba,Ma,NS,Ru	Br,NC,Ru	As,Ba,Ge,Ma,NS	NC	Remaining	Ru,NS,Ge	Ma,As,Br,Ba	NC
Population (2023)	561,011	612,759	566,302	607,468	329,276	844,494	368,585	475,909	329,276
Geographic area (sq km) (2023)	275	1,887	565	1598	75	2,087	1,181	906	75
Population density (people per sqkm) (2023)	2,042	325	1,004	380	4,412	404	312	525	4,412
Total GVA (£ million) (2022)	15,684	13,743	17,452	11,975	11,477	17,950	8,091	9,859	11,477
GVA per capita (£) (2022)	27,957	22,428	30,817	19,713	34,855	21,255	21,952	20,716	34,855
65+ Population (2023)	89,369	130,766	90,477	129,649	38,732	181,394	81,774	99,620	38,732
Deprivation score (2019)	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.13	0.20	0.11	0.09	0.13	0.20
Homelessness Rate (per 1,000 Households) (Apr-Jun 2024)	2.21	1.04	2.27	0.97	3.38	0.90	0.76	1.01	3.38
Unemployment rates (%) (Oct 23-Sept 24)	4.78	3.91	4.37	4.16	6.58	3.90	3.23	4.41	6.58
Total Crime Rate per 1,000 Population (2024)	69.50	64.15	68.85	64.71	118.41	46.55	23.37	64.50	118.41
Housing Delivery Test Measurement (2023) (%)	109%	182%	126%	167%	115%	158%	158%	158%	115%
Council tax base (number of band D equivalent properties) (2024)	146,295	195,702	154,400	187,596	71,062	270,934	130,154	140,779	71,062
Council Tax band D (average) (£) (2024-26)	2,562	2,528	2,533	2,547	2,656	2,525	2,501	2,543	2,656
Retained Business Rates (£m) (2024-25)	84.8	81.8	85.9	80.0	62.2	103.7	40.3	63.4	62.2
Non-Earmarked Reserves (£m) (2023-24)*	101.8	251.6	92.4	261.1	17.6	335.8	151.6	184.2	17.6
Net revenue expenditure (£m) (2023/24)*	417	508	423.1	502	231	694	306	387	231
Financing Costs (£m) (2023/24)*	43.6	26.7	41.6	28.7	30.9	39.5	18.9	20.6	30.9
Financing Costs as % Net revenue expenditure (2023-24)*	10%	5%	10%	6%	13%	6%	6%	5%	13%

1 2 3 4 5

Step 3. Evaluation criteria developed

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Fourteen evaluation criteria have been defined by direct reference to Government guidance in the letter dated 6th February 2025 and the guidance provided by Government in June 2025.

The letter includes clear requirements to be included within LGR proposals. These have been used to develop the evaluation criteria shown here where they enable comparison between options.

Some of the government requirements are not included in the evaluation criteria where they have been deemed to be statements of requirements for proposals rather than differentiating factors for LGR geographies.

Evaluation criteria defined to structure options analysis

Headline Government Criteria	Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance
1. Establishing a single tier of local government	1.1 Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base
	1.2 Sensible geography to increase housing supply and meet local needs
	1.3 Single tier governance structures
2. Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks	2.1 Population of 500,000 or more as a guiding principle
	2.2 Efficiencies to improve council finances and taxpayer value for money
	2.3 Transition costs and transformation opportunities
	2.4 Putting local government finances on a firmer financial footing
3. High quality and sustainable public services	3.1 Improving service delivery and avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation
	3.2 Public service reform and better value for money
	3.3 Impact on crucial services such as social care, children's services, SEND and homelessness
4. Working together to understand and meet local needs	4.1 Local identity, culture and historical importance
	4.2 Views expressed through local engagement, and ability to address any concerns
5. Supporting devolution arrangements	5.1 Sensible population ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority
6. Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment	6.1 Enabling strong community engagement

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Step 4: Metrics identified against each criteria

For each of the 15 evaluation criteria, a series of metrics have been identified. Each of these has been included in the analysis on the basis that it provides a potential means for differentiating between options.

For each metric identified, a statement of 'What does good look like and why?" has been set to guide the evaluation of options.

***Example metrics identified: Evaluation Criteria 1.1* - Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base**

Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
Gross Value Added (GVA) per Capita	Balanced GVA per capita between unitaries, suggesting balanced levels of productivity and positive implications for the distribution of economic prosperity.
Total Gross Value Added (GVA)	Each unitary has a sufficient GVA to generate tax and there is balance between unitaries, meaning good long-term prospects for all future authorities.
Council tax base (number of properties at Band D equivalent)	All authorities with a sufficient number and profile of properties to provide a Council tax base which can sustainably support services, with a reasonable balance between authorities.
Business rates tax base	All authorities with a strong Business rates tax base sufficient to provide all unitaries with a strong, stable economic foundation, with a reasonable balance between authorities.
Council Tax harmonisation / difference in Band D rates	Councils within a unitary have low to no difference between council tax rates. The least difference between councils within a unitary would provide minimal administrative and resident disruption in harmonising rates.
Functional economic areas and travel to work areas	Alignment with functional economic areas / travel to work areas (TTWAs), allowing all unitaries to form clear and coherent economic strategies and plans.
Ability to drive economic growth	Future unitary geographies should allow all areas to deliver strong economic growth and take advantage of the opportunities presented by devolution.

This example is one of 14 evaluation criteria included in this report.

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Step 5: Scoring options against criteria

For each metric across all 14 evaluation criteria, a Red, Amber, Green ('RAG') approach has been taken to provide a summary view of how each option performed against "what good looks like".

Green *= Option meets the definition of 'what good looks like'*

Amber*: Option partially meets the definition of 'what good looks like'*

Red*: Option does not meet the definition of 'what good looks like'*

The greens, ambers and reds across each of the metrics have then been used to arrive at a score of '1', '2' or '3' across the evaluation criteria.

'3' *= Option meets the combined definition of 'what good looks like' across the evaluation criteria*

'2'*: Option partially meets the definition of 'what good looks like' across the evaluation criteria*

'1'*: Option does not meet the definition of 'what good looks like' across the evaluation criteria*

Example scoring against evaluation criteria: Evaluation Criteria 1.1 **– Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base**

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
1.1 Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base	2	2	2	2	• For the three-unitary model (and option 2C) the economic prospects of Nottingham City are a key factor. The City has significantly higher GVA per capita than other potential unitaries. • The two new unitaries proposed under the three-unitary model are well balanced and will enable a more targeted economic growth strategy for each unitary (e.g. East Midlands Freeport in Rushcliffe and Fusion Power Plant in Bassetlaw, with Nottingham City remaining a major economic centre).

This example is one of 14 evaluation criteria included in this report.

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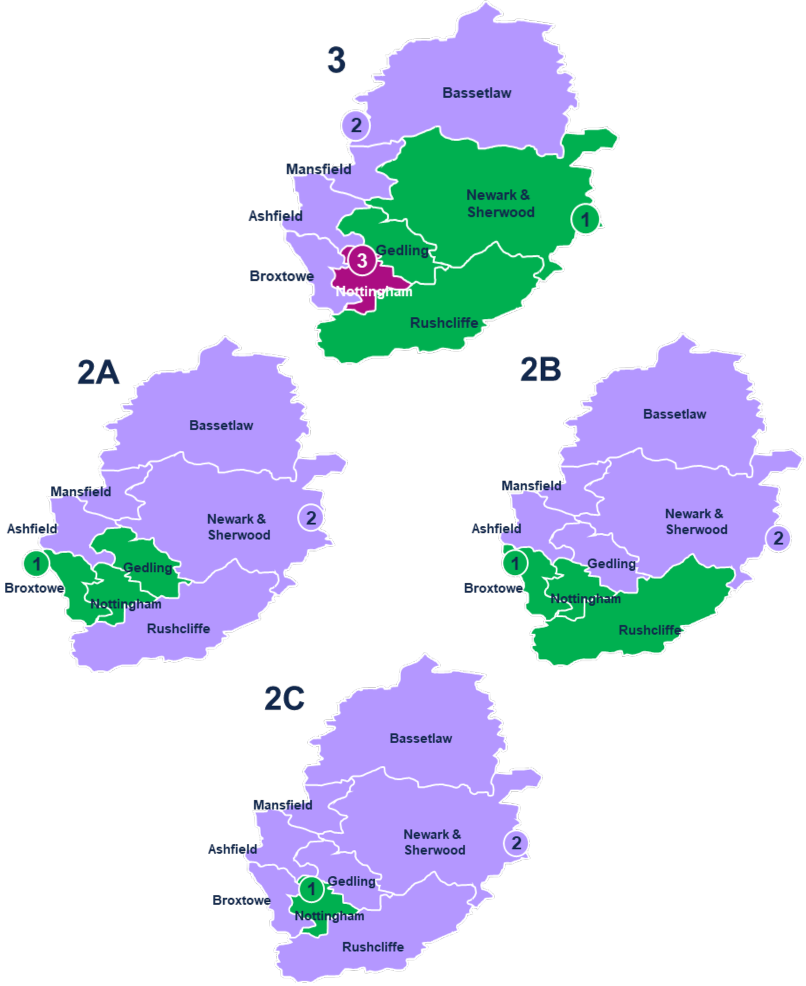
2. Options evaluation results

Summary scoring by evaluation criteria



Headline Government Criteria	Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option			
		3	2A	2B	2C
1. Establishing a single tier of local government	1.1 Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base	2	2	2	2
	1.2 Sensible geography to increase housing supply and meet local needs	2	2	3	1
	1.3 Single tier local government structures	3	3	3	2
2. Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks	2.1 Population of 500,000 or more as a guiding principle	2	3	3	2
	2.2 Efficiencies to improve council finances and taxpayer value for money	1	3	3	2
	2.3 Transition costs and transformation opportunities	2	2	2	3
	2.4 Putting local government finances on a firmer financial footing	1	3	3	1
3. High quality and sustainable public services	3.1 Improving service delivery and avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation	2	2	2	2
	3.2 Public service reform and better value for money	2	2	2	2
	3.3 Impact on crucial services such as social care, children's services, SEND and homelessness	2	2	2	2
4. Working together to understand and meet local needs	4.1 Issues of local identity and cultural and historic importance	3	2	1	2
	4.2 Views expressed through local engagement, and ability to address any concerns	3	2	1	3
5. Supporting devolution arrangements	5.1 Sensible population ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority	3	3	3	2
6. Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment	6.1 Enabling strong community engagement	3	2	2	1
Total		31	33	32	27
Rank		3	1	2	4

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Headline criteria 1: Establishing a single tier of local government

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
1.1 Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base	2	2	2	2	• For the three-unitary model (and option 2C) the economic prospects of Nottingham City are a key factor. The City has significantly higher GVA per capita than other potential unitaries. • The two new unitaries proposed under the three-unitary model are well balanced and will enable a more targeted economic growth strategy for each unitary (e.g. East Midlands Freeport in Rushcliffe and Fusion Power Plant in Bassetlaw, with Nottingham City remaining a major economic centre).
1.2 Sensible geography to increase housing supply and meet local needs	2	2	3	1	• For the three-unitary model (and option 2C) the ability of Nottingham City to deliver housing growth despite its high population density is a key factor. The City has a strong housing delivery test measurement of 115%. • The three-unitary model enables stronger transport connectivity, and lower travel times across future unitaries. • Option 2B has a more sensible geographic split in terms of travel than options 2A or 2C and has more balanced population density than option 2C. • Option 2C leaves a challenging geography for travel and service delivery in the 'County' unitary, whilst also leaving Nottingham City with potential challenges in delivering housing growth given it will not have access to green belt sites.
1.3 Single tier local government structures	3	3	3	2	• All options have population numbers that would enable an effective local government governance structure to be established, with reasonable population ratios and council numbers compared to comparator unitary authorities across the country. Option 2C would be the most imbalanced of all options given the geographic scale of the City versus all other district areas of the County.

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Headline criteria 2: Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
2.1 Population of 500,000 or more as a guiding principle	2	3	3	2	• Government set a guiding principle of 500k but also communicated that there is flexibility based on local circumstances. • The three-unitary model is reasonably well balanced on population, with populations ranging from 329k to 476k – all with significant scale and potential for growth. • Options 2A and 2B are all well balanced with populations between 561k and 613k, clearly meeting the governments guide level of 500k. • Option 2C is imbalanced with one unitary significantly larger than the other, and well over the 500k guiding principle: 844k vs 329k.
2.2 Efficiencies to improve council finances and taxpayer value for money	1	3	3	2	• In the three-unitary model and option 2C, LGR efficiencies are limited to the County Council area, with Nottingham City remaining unchanged. Option 2C being slightly more efficient in terms of savings with creation of 2 new unitaries. • Options 2A and 2B have greater opportunity for LGR-associated efficiency, with Nottingham City Council participating in LGR. • Arguably in a three-unitary model, long-term focus on outcomes and improvement can be delivered through a more local model. • It is clear that the disaggregation of reserves alone will leave Nottingham City significantly imbalanced with other authorities (determining the status of option 3 as red)
2.3 Transition costs and transformation opportunities	2	2	2	3	• Implementation complexity, risk and cost is reduced with option 3 as it leaves Nottingham City Council unchanged. However, implementation costs associated with splitting County Council services and establishing the two new Councils will be incurred during transition. • Option 2C minimises transition costs by keeping current County and City footprints unchanged. • Transformation opportunities exist in all potential future authorities.
2.4 Putting local government finances on a firmer financial footing	1	3	3	1	• A key challenge for the three-unitary model (and option 2C) is the financial position of Nottingham City Council, following the issuing of a Section 114 notice in November 2023. It could be argued that the City could benefit from joining with more financially healthy neighbours and receiving a proportion of current County Council reserves. However, it can also be argued that LGR has the potential to impact NCC's recovery journey. • Options 2A and 2B provide more even distributions of reserves and debt, but in all cases the unitary containing the City remains more financially challenged.

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Headline criteria 3: High quality and sustainable public services

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
3.1 Improving service delivery and avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation	2	2	2	2	• The three unitary model will involve fragmentation of current County Council services, but does not cause disruption to Nottingham City, which is on an existing improvement journey. • Option 2C avoids County Council or City service fragmentation but does not provide as much of an opportunity for improving Nottingham City service delivery and leaves a less manageable geography for local service delivery. • Options 2A and 2B, whilst maintaining the same number of upper tier authorities, will involve significant change and potential disruption to current service delivery.
3.2 Public service reform and better value for money	2	2	2	2	• The ability to drive public service reform will be largely determined by the strategies adopted by each of the individual new Councils. • Arguably the 3 unitary model can enable more effective localism, forming three more local unitaries with a more consistent, coherent identity. • Options 2A and 2B combine the City with rural areas; combining areas with fundamentally different identities and priorities of residents.
3.3 Impact on crucial services such as social care, children's services, SEND and homelessness	2	2	2	2	• The three unitary model allows Nottingham City to continue its improvement journey without disruption but will entail a split of current county level services. • Option 2C minimises disruption to County level services but has less associated opportunity for potential improvement in Nottingham City services. • Options 2A and 2B involve significant disruption to current service delivery.

Headline criteria 4: Working together to understand and meet local needs

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
4.1 Issues of local identity and cultural and historic importance	3	2	1	2	• The three unitary model preserves identities across rural district authorities by allowing them to remain separate from Nottingham City. • The two unitary model poses a greater risk to a meaningful sense of identity to Districts currently bordering the City. • Option 2C suggests a large geography which is likely to present challenges in retaining a meaningful connection to local identity • Options 2A & 2B challenge bringing rural areas into a City identify with stronger sentiment from residents and Councillors against option 2B.
4.2 Views expressed through local engagement, and ability to address any concerns	3	2	1	3	• Within more rural District and Borough council areas there is evidence of strong preferences for remaining separate from Nottingham City. This strength of feeling is most evident within Rushcliffe. • Partner organisations understandably wish to remain apolitical but have expressed views that fewer organisations to coordinate across will drive administrative efficiencies, whilst needing to retain the ability to engage at a local/neighbourhood level.

Headline criteria 5: Supporting devolution arrangements

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
5.1 Sensible population ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority	3	3	3	2	• The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) was created through a devolution deal and involves Derbyshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Derby City Council and Nottingham City Council all working together to support the region as a whole. The total population of the Combined County Area is c2.3m. Derbyshire currently has around 1.1million residents, compared to 1.2m in Nottinghamshire. • Intelligence indicates that a two-unitary model is likely to be proposed in Derbyshire. Assuming a two or three unitary model in Nottinghamshire, that would mean either four or five future members of a Combined County Authority. The decision to form either two or three unitary authorities in Nottinghamshire will not significantly impact the function of the strategic authority. • Option 2C presents potential challenges for governance of the future strategic authority given the imbalance in size of the two Nottinghamshire unitaries.

Headline criteria 6: Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
6.1 Enabling strong community engagement	3	2	2	1	• The three unitary model preserves identities across rural district authorities by allowing them to remain separate from Nottingham City and enables greater community engagement through more manageable unitary geographies. • Two unitary models poses a greater risk to losing a meaningful sense of identity and community engagement, particularly for Districts currently bordering Nottingham City. • The large geography suggested by option 2C presents challenges in retaining the quality of community engagement currently delivered by District Councils.

LGR Options Appraisal – stakeholder views

Stakeholder engagement has taken place as a key input to the options appraisal process. Whilst stakeholders have not stated a direct preference for a particular option, some highly valuable inputs have been gathered which will inform ongoing planning.

Key stakeholders engaged

- Stakeholder interviews have taken place as part of the options appraisal. Given time constrains, key partners across health and emergency services have been prioritised, with questions focussed on the following:
    - What matters most to you for future local government delivery, including in relation to partnership between health and local government?
    - Do you have a preference for a particular geographic option?
    - Are there any risks associated with a three-unitary model that you would want to see mitigated?
- At the point of drafting, discussions have taken place with senior representative of Nottingham & Notts Integrated Care Board , Nottinghamshire Police & Crime Commissioner's Office and Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

Key themes noted

- Partners place a great deal of value in their current working relationships with all current authorities, including their more strategic relationships with the County and City, and their place-based working with Districts and Borough Councils.
- Stakeholders generally see local government reorganisation as an opportunity to further strengthen partnership working across Nottinghamshire.
- Regardless of the model selected, key relationships and partnership working will need to take place at a neighbourhood level.
- It was noted that for some more strategic functions, a lower number of unitaries may ease administration and avoid duplication. However, opportunities were also noted to shift some strategic working to the combined authority level over time.
- It was requested that during business case stage, analysis should be undertaken on patient flows and how this can best be integrated into the proposed model.

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3. Financial model: LGR costs and savings

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Finance Model Approach – 2 and 3 Unitary Options

The finance modelling completed at the options appraisal stage is for comparative purposes only and does not take any account of specific design choices made within any of the options.

Decision point

Phase 1: Options Appraisal

Top-down financial model to enable comparison between options

The work during Phase 1 is based on a top-down financial model using publicly available data and evidence from past local government reorganisation programmes to assess the headline financial impact of a three-unitary model in comparison to two-unitary options.

Phase 2: Business Case

Bottom-up financial model for three unitary model

If a business case is developed for a three-unitary model, a more detailed bottom-up exercise will be completed, with data to be gathered from across the councils.

Structure of Phase 1 financial model

Implementation costs (one-off)

Estimated investment required to receive the benefit of the potential savings.

Revenue savings (annual)

The annual efficiency benefits achievable by removing duplication, consolidating services, and operating at greater scale, and the additional recurring expenditure that results from dividing upper tier services into multiple new upper tier authorities (where relevant).

Payback period and 5-year net benefit

The savings and costs calculated for each option have then been phases to show payback period and the cumulative benefits over a 5-year period.

Further details of the financial methodology and key assumptions are included in Appendix 2: Financial model assumptions and inputs

Options appraisal: Finance modelling results

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Below is a summary of the results of the financial modelling carried out to support the options appraisal, comparing the three unitary model to the two-unitary models already being analysed.

LGR Option	Key features of model driving level of costs and benefits	Implementation costs (one-off) (£m)	Revenue savings (annual, recurring) (£m)	Net annual impact after five years (£m)	Estimated payback period
2A, 2B	• Savings potential exists across the whole of Nottinghamshire, including Nottingham City • No recurring disaggregation costs because there are the same number of 'upper tier' authorities as currently • Implementation complexity and costs are relatively high due to splitting of County and creation of new unitary including Nottingham.	(34.6)	27.7	92.8	Within 2 years
2C	• Savings only relate to Nottinghamshire County Council area • No recurring disaggregation costs because there are the same number of 'upper tier' authorities as currently • Implementation complexity and costs are minimised as current upper tier geographies remain	(19.0)	21.0	77.5	Within 1 year
3	• Savings potential is reduced as Nottingham City is excluded from LGR. • Recurring disaggregation costs exist due to County Council split. • Implementation costs are reduced due to leaving Nottingham City as-is.	(24.9)	5.3	-	5 years

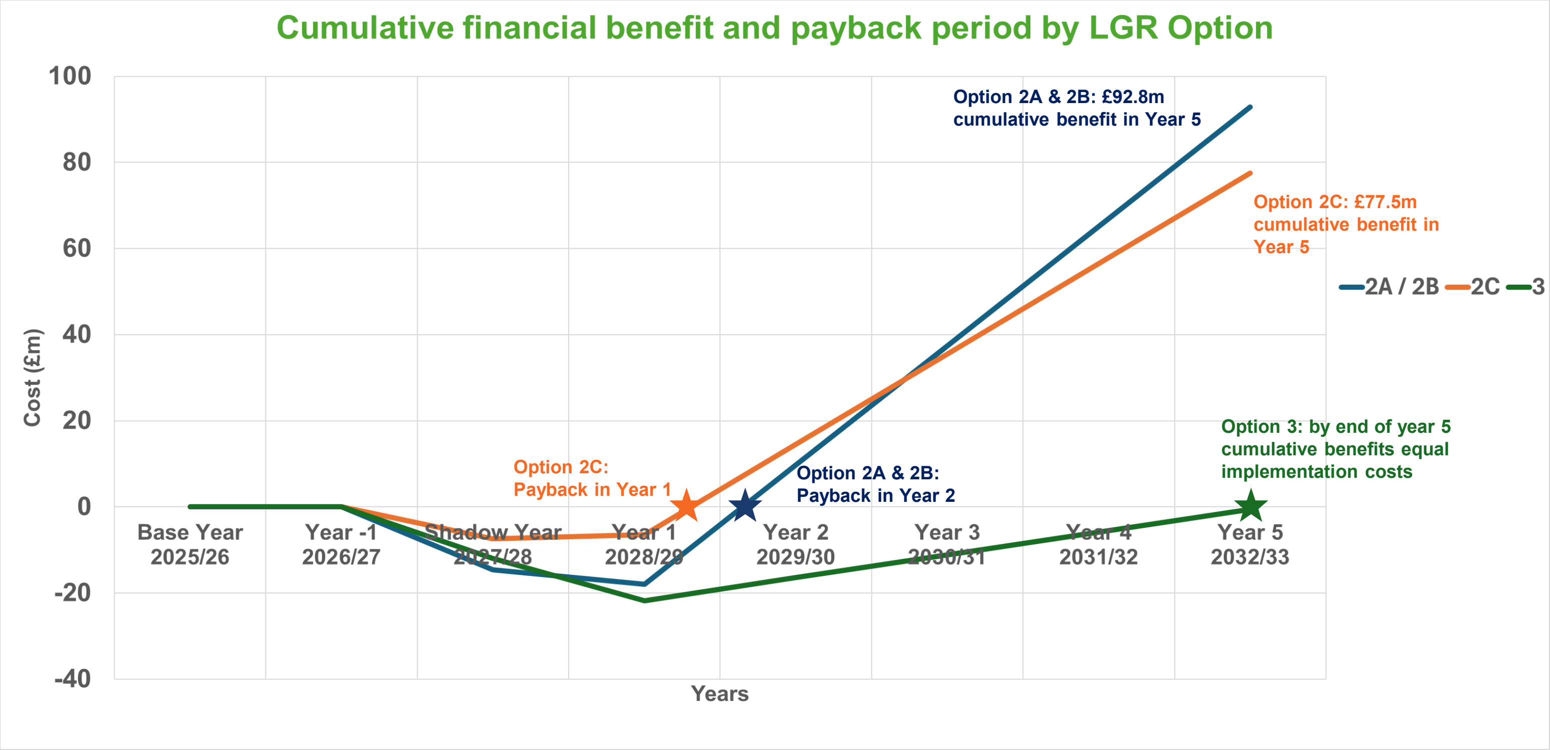
The finance model is driven by a set of assumptions and inputs. These are referenced in Appendix 2: Financial model assumptions and inputs

Cumulative financial benefit and payback period

The chart below shows the cumulative financial benefit for each of the options up to 5 years post formation of new authorities.

Analysis indicates for Options 2A and 2B cumulative savings will exceed implementation costs within 2 years. Option 2C will deliver a net benefit within 1 year due to lower implementation complexity and cost, but Options 2A and 2B ultimately delivering the higher financial benefit.

For Option 3, the payback period is projected to take longer, with cumulative savings from reorganisation expected to exceed costs from Year 5 onwards.



The finance model is driven by a set of assumptions and inputs. These are referenced in Appendix 2: Financial model assumptions and inputs

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4. Key considerations informing decision to proceed

Key considerations for a potential three-unitary model

Through the completion of Phase 1 analysis and engagement, six key topics have been identified which will be key factors for leadership of Rushcliffe Council to consider in order to determine whether to proceed to development of a business case for the three-unitary model.

1. **Identity and sense of place**
2. **Economies of scale and financial benefits**
3. **The growth potential of Nottingham**
4. **Nottingham City debt levels and financial resilience**
5. **Implementation complexity and risk**
6. **Political reality**

Key considerations relating to each of these six topics have been summarised on the following pages.

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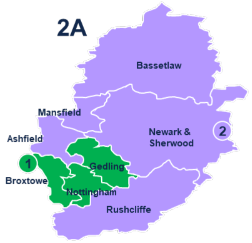
Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (1) Identity and sense of place

A three-unitary business case would stress the importance of authorities being grounded in identity and sense of place. The articulation of the specific identities of the two new, more rural proposed authorities will need particular focus with collaboration of partners and stakeholders across the County.

Key points to consider

- What is the specific story to be told about the common identity of (1) Rushcliffe, Gedling and Newark & Sherwood and (2) Ashfield / Bassetlaw / Broxtowe / Mansfield?
- How can partners and stakeholders across the area be engaged to help shape the narrative for these proposed future geographies?
- What model of local democracy and place-based working could be delivered within the three-unitary model?
- What further public and stakeholder engagement will be delivered to help shape the proposed model?



Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (2) Economies of scale and financial benefits

Based on financial modelling carried out during Phase 1, it will be challenging for a three-unitary business case to argue that it will be the leading option from a financial benefits perspective. However, a bottom-up financial model within a full business case could make an argument for a more favourable financial position based on design decisions around services and council delivery models.

Key points to consider

- The Government has set out that 500k population size is the guide for authorities to consider when looking at future authority formulations. However, it is accepted that arguments can (and will) be made for lower population sizes based on a good rationale from local leaders. Arguments could be made, including using population growth projections, that each of the three unitaries proposed will be operating at sufficient scale to delivery efficiently.
- Could some services or functions be delivered across the two more rural authorities, thereby increasing efficiency and reducing implementation complexity?
- What functions could be delivered at a Combined Authority level in order to minimise duplication of strategic functions?
- Can an argument be made that more localised working will result in improved outcomes for residents, thereby reducing demand and improving the financial position of councils in the long term?

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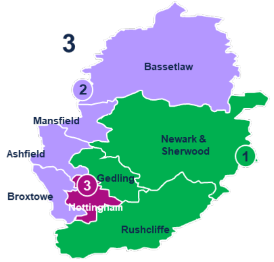
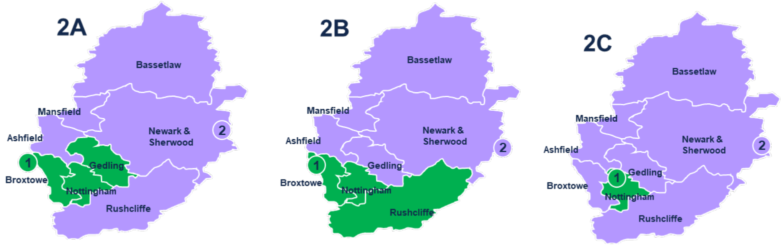
Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (3) The growth potential of Nottingham

The potential for economic growth and housing growth for Nottingham is expected to be a key consideration for the Government. By leaving the current Nottingham City unitary authority unchanged, a question that a business case will need to be addressed is how growth in the City can be unlocked.

Key points to consider

- Is there the potential for Nottingham City to deliver significant housing growth, even within its current boundaries?
- How can other unitary authorities and the Strategic Authority work in partnership with Nottingham City to support economic growth?
- What engagement will take place with Nottingham City and others to support positioning of a growth story for Nottingham?





Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (4) Debt levels and financial resilience of Nottingham

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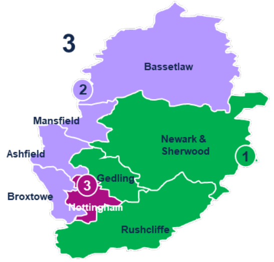
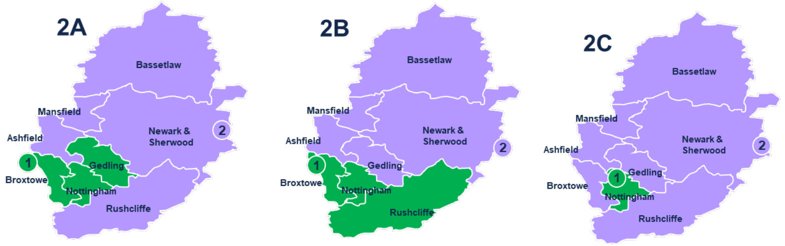
The City of Nottingham has widely recognised financial challenges, including high levels of debt and low levels of reserves. A business case for a three unitary model would need to tell a compelling story about the long-term financial resilience of the current Nottingham City authority, given that a three-unitary model would leave the financial position of the current authority as-is.

Key points to consider

- Nottingham City Council issued a S114 notice in November 2023 on the basis that it could not set a balanced budget for 23/24. Commissioners have now issued their second progress report and significant challenges remain. Usable reserves of just £17.6m and financing costs as a percentage of net revenue expenditure of 13% both present risks in relation to financial resilience of the City.
- Nottingham City Council leadership, including Commissioners will have their own views on which LGR option will be most beneficial from the City's perspective. This view is likely to carry some weight in Government evaluation.
- The long-term financial prospects of the City may be substantially improved due to the Fair Funding Review, which is expected to result in funding being redirected towards areas with greater levels of deprivation.





Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (5) Implementation complexity and risk

Generally, local government reorganisation complexity and cost increases as the number of proposed unitaries increases. However, as the three-unitary model leaves the current Nottingham City unitary authority as-is, it can reasonably be argued that implementation complexity is lower than for Options 2A and 2B, which involve Nottingham City in reorganisation.

Key points to consider

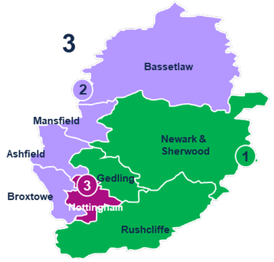
- Could it be argued that leaving Nottingham City untouched by LGR is helpful given the improvement and recovery journey that Nottingham City is currently midway through? Under models 2A and 2B, local government reorganisation would need to become a central focus for Nottingham leadership over the next 2-3 years, which has the potential to be an unwelcome distraction.
- Can implementation complexity and risk of a three-unitary model be further reduced though shared service or alternative delivery model choices within the current County Council area?

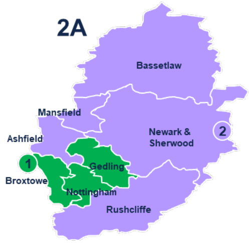
Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (6) Political reality

Rushcliffe leadership will need to take a view of the likelihood of a three-unitary model ultimately being selected by Government. Government are likely to consider the number of authorities backing specific options.

Key points to consider

- The chances of a proposal being successful are reduced if Rushcliffe is the only authority arguing for a three-unitary model. Might any other authorities provide backing to a three-unitary model once details are made public?
- Given the ongoing intervention at Nottingham City Council following issuing of a Section 114 notice, Nottingham City Council's position on a preferred option is likely to carry weight in Government evaluation.





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Appendix 1: Data sources

Appendix 1: Data Sources (1/2)

Dataset	Link
Estimates of the population for England and Wales	https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/estimatesofthe populationforenglandandwales
Standard Area Measurements for Administrative Areas (December 2023) in the UK	https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/datasets/da8590c5f55f4664b32Ad4339f43419c/about
Statement of Accounts	https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/media/iumhajfe/final-statement-of-accounts-2023-2024-signed-with-audit-opinion.pdf
	https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/media/clpiwcv5/statement-of-accounts-2023-to-2024.pdf
	https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/media/mz0kzy43/statement-of-accounts-23-24.pdf
	https://www.broxtowe.gov.uk/media/qmqjn0e4/broxtowe-bc_statement-of-accounts-2023-24-final_encrypted_.pdf
	https://www.gedling.gov.uk/media/Audited%20Statement%20of%20Accounts%20and%20Annual%20Governance%20Statement%202023-24.pdf
	https://www.mansfield.gov.uk/downloads/file/6572/draft-mansfield-district-council-statement-of-accounts-2023-2024
	https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/media/nsdc-redesign/documents-and-images/your-council/access-to-our-information/council-spending/statement-of-accounts/website-version-statement-of-accounts.pdf
	https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/cnkdgobd/statement-of-accounts-23-24-final-inc-audit-report.pdf
Council Tax Rates Band D	https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/council-tax/general-information-about-your-council-tax/bands-and-charges/
	https://democracy.ashfield.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=18186#:~:text=Ashfield%20District%20Council's%20basic%20(band,Tax%20by%20an%20excessive%20amount.
	https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/council-tax/your-council-tax-explained/
	https://www.gedling.gov.uk/resident/counciltax/howmuchiscounciltaxandhowisitspent/
	https://www.gedling.gov.uk/resident/counciltax/howmuchiscounciltaxandhowisitspent/
	https://www.mansfield.gov.uk/council-tax/much-council-tax-1/2
	https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/media/nsdc-redesign/documents-and-images/your-home/council-tax/information-on-your-council-tax/council-tax-2025/Council-Tax-Charges-2025-to-26.pdf
	https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/council-tax/how-much-will-i-pay/council-tax-band-charges-202425/
Regional gross domestic product: local authorities	https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproductgdp/datasets/regionalgrossdomesticproductlocalauthorities
Tables on homelessness	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness
Life expectancy for local areas of Great Britain	https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandlifeexpectancies/datasets/lifeexpectan cyforlocalareasofgreatbritain?utm
Mapping income deprivation at a local authority level	https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/incomeandwealth/datasets/mappingi ncomedeprivationatalocalauthoritylevel

Appendix 1: Data Sources (2/2)

Dataset	Link
LI01 Regional labour market: local indicators for counties, local and unitary authorities	https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/li01regionallabourmarketlocalindicatorsforcountieslocalandunitaryauthorities?utm
Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables	https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/policeforceareadatatables
Housing Delivery Test: 2023 measurement	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-delivery-test-2023-measurement
Local authority revenue expenditure and financing England: 2023 to 2024 individual local authority data - outturn	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing-england-2023-to-2024-individual- local-authority-data-outturn
Council Taxbase Local Authority Level Data 2024	https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fmedia%2F67cab2ba8247839c255ae419%2FCouncil_Taxbase_Local_Authority_Level_Data_2024.ods&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK
National non-domestic rates collected by councils in England: forecast 2024 to 2025	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-non-domestic-rates-collected-by-councils-in-england-forecast-2024-to- 2025
Updated financial analysis: evaluating the importance of scale in proposals for local government reorganisation	https://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/updated-financial-analysis-evaluating-the-importance-of-scale-in-proposals-for- local-government-reorganisation/
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Nottingham	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - Nottingham Insight
Nottingham Local Transport Plan	Local Transport Plan | Nottinghamshire County Council
Nottingham SEND Service	Special Educational Needs Service - Nottingham City Council
Retained Business Rates	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-non-domestic-rates-collected-by-councils-in-england-forecast-2024-to-2025

Rushcliffe
Borough Council

Appendix 2: Finance model approach and assumptions

Finance Model Approach: Implementation costs

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Approach

Implementation cost calculations are based on the level of costs identified and incurred in comparable local government reorganisation programmes, adjusted for the respective sizes of the Councils on a population basis. Implementation costs have been identified and estimated in key areas and all categories have been benchmarked against recent local government reorganisation cases (costs forecast and incurred).

Inputs

The implementation calculations uses projected numbers and population numbers from benchmarked local government reorganisation cases from the following areas:

- Cornwall
- Wiltshire
- Dorset
- BCP Council
- Buckinghamshire
- Somerset
- York & North Yorkshire West
- York & North Yorkshire East
- North Northamptonshire
- West Northamptonshire
- Cumbria North
- Cumbria South
- Hertfordshire South West
- Hertfordshire North East

The implementation calculation then uses the population numbers for each proposed unitary in options 2A, 2B, 2C and 3D to calculate the per capita implementation figure.

Timing assumptions

The implementation calculation assumes that implementation costs will be incurred across the shadow year and then over a two-year period following Day 1 of the new authorities. The model then assumes no implementation costs for the years beyond this.

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Financial Model Approach: Implementation costs

As part of implementation cost benchmarking, categories of implementation costs have been identified to provide an indication of the expected breakdown of costs, for any of the LGR options.

Implementation cost category	Description	Estimated % of Total Implementation Costs
Workforce - Exit	Compensation paid to employees as a result of restructuring/redundancies, including redundancy payments, pension strain, TUPE, salary harmonisation, and other contract termination fees.	46%
Workforce - Development	Additional costs to upskill and reskill employees to adapt to new roles and responsibilities.	5%
Transition - Team	Implementation programme team including: Legal, Contract Negotiation, Project and Programme Management, and specialist support.	13%
Transition - Culture and Communications	Costs to develop communications, branding, training, and public information in relation to new authorities. This should inform the public, stakeholders, and employees of proposed changes and address concerns.	4%
Transition - Processes	Work required to harmonise processes, and facilitate effective service transition. This includes specific constitutional changes and developments, democratic transition, and new policies and procedures.	8%
Consolidation - Systems	Alignment of systems and digital infrastructure, including merging systems, data migration, commonality of cyber security, and training for new systems.	7%
Consolidation - Estates and Facilities	Reconfiguration of buildings, costs of disposal, and termination fees on leases.	8%
Contingency	Additional 10% contingency to allow for prudence in estimates.	10%

Finance Model Approach: Revenue savings

Approach

Net savings calculations outputs the annual efficiency benefits achievable using a per capita approach and by removing duplication, consolidating services, operating at greater scale and consideration of disaggregation costs where applicable. Disaggregation costs are only considered for the three unitary option only as there would be a change in the number of 'upper tier' authorities after reorganisation. The output is then used to project net savings/costs across the 5-year payback period. All categories have been benchmarked against recent local government reorganisation cases (costs forecast and incurred). The modelling has been done on the proposed two and three unitary options.

Inputs

The net savings calculations uses projected savings, disaggregation and population numbers from benchmarked local government reorganisation cases from the following councils:

- Cornwall
- Wiltshire
- Dorset
- BCP Council
- Buckinghamshire
- Somerset
- York & North Yorkshire West
- York & North Yorkshire East
- North Northamptonshire
- West Northamptonshire
- Cumbria East
- Cumbria West
- Hertfordshire South West
- Hertfordshire North East

The savings calculation then uses the population numbers for each proposed unitary in options 2A, 2B, 2C and 3 to calculate the per capita savings figure.

Assumptions

The net savings calculation assumes that savings realisation will begin with a 10% realisation in the shadow year, progressing to 50% in year 1 and reaching full realisation by year 2. The savings figure are then fully realised from year 2 to year 5 during the payback period. Given there is no net gain/loss of councils during this process, loss of economies of scale, duplication of governance structures and transition costs are factored as nil. For option 2C, the savings calculation calculates savings figures only relating to the Nottinghamshire County area as it is expected there will be no changes to the Nottingham City Council structure/operations.

Finance Model Approach: Revenue savings

Rushcliffe
Borough Council

As part of benchmarking LGR revenue savings, categories of savings have been identified to provide an indication of the expected breakdown of savings, for any of the LGR options.

Cost Category/Item	Description	% of Total Savings
Optimising Leadership	Reviewing the number of managerial roles to eliminate duplication and enhance operational efficiency, by merging similar responsibilities into fewer and more impactful positions.	20%
Right Sizing the Organisation	Determining the right size of the organisation, proportionate to the services that are being delivered, offset by the costs of new technology and upskilling individuals. Reducing overall workforce through role consolidation and automation.	24%
Consolidating Corporate Services	Consolidating back-office functions, such as Human Resources (HR), Finance and Information Technology (IT) to streamline operations, enhance efficiencies and unlock savings.	10%
Service Contract Consolidation	Understanding current and joint service arrangements between Councils, and what savings (or costs) may be incurred on consolidation. Determining the optimum sourcing arrangements for contracts that are either currently outsourced or could be outsourced. This will need to consider both financial and operational efficiency and will consider existing arrangements with third parties.	10%
Procurement & 3rd Party Spend	Centralising procurement to determine resultant costs/savings through relative purchasing power and renegotiating terms with suppliers. Where appropriate, consolidating similar contracts for service delivery, presents an opportunity to renegotiate terms and achieve economies of scale with suppliers.	10%
Proportionate Democratic Services	Reviewing the costs of democratic services (elections, committee support, etc.) to be proportionate to the new authority. Reducing the number of councillors and governance costs (e.g. committees, elections).	4%
Improved Digital & IT Systems	Implementing unified digital platforms, automating repetitive tasks, streamlining workflows, and eliminating manual processes, can lead to significant time and cost savings. Unified platforms and systems rationalisation reduce licensing, support, and admin overheads.	9%
Asset & Property Optimisation	Reviewing property portfolio to ensure alignment with the council's overall objectives and community needs.	9%
Customer Engagement	Enhancing customer contact facilities, determining the needs of citizens in the new authority and developing a proportionate customer contact centre, where appropriate including self-service through digital channels, to improve customer engagement, satisfaction and drive operational efficiencies and cost savings.	2%
Consolidating Fleets & Optimising Routes	Exploring consolidation of fleets and any route efficiencies, to reduce costs and minimise environmental impact. Reducing fleet size and improving vehicle routing to lower transport costs.	2%

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Appendix 3: Key metrics and factors by criteria

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Key metrics and factors by criteria: (1) Establishing a single tier of local government

Criteria	Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
1.1 Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base	Gross Value Added (GVA) per Capita	Balanced GVA per capita between unitaries, suggesting balanced levels of productivity and positive implications for the distribution of economic prosperity.
	Total Gross Value Added (GVA)	Each unitary has a sufficient GVA to generate tax and there is balance between unitaries, meaning good long-term prospects for all future authorities.
	Council tax base (number of properties at Band D equivalent)	All authorities with a sufficient number and profile of properties to provide a Council tax base which can sustainably support services, with a reasonable balance between authorities.
	Business rates tax base	All authorities with a strong Business rates tax base sufficient to provide all unitaries with a strong, stable economic foundation, with a reasonable balance between authorities.
	Council Tax harmonisation / difference in Band D rates	Councils within a unitary have low to no difference between council tax rates. The least difference between councils within a unitary would provide minimal administrative and resident disruption in harmonising rates.
	Functional economic areas and travel to work areas	Alignment with functional economic areas / travel to work areas (TTWAs), allowing all unitaries to form clear and coherent economic strategies and plans.
	Ability to drive economic growth	Future unitary geographies should allow all areas to deliver strong economic growth and take advantage of the opportunities presented by devolution.
1.2 Sensible geography to increase housing supply and meet local needs	Council Tax harmonisation / difference in Band D rates	Councils within a unitary have low to no difference between council tax rates. The least difference between councils within a unitary would provide minimal administrative and resident disruption in harmonising rates.
	Functional economic areas and travel to work areas	Alignment with functional economic areas / travel to work areas (TTWAs), allowing all unitaries to form clear and coherent economic strategies and plans.
	Ability to drive economic growth	Future unitary geographies should allow all areas to deliver strong economic growth and take advantage of the opportunities presented by devolution.
1.3 Single tier governance structures	Councillor to electorate ratio	Ability to establish a councillor to electorate ratio within each authority that allows for a workable number of councillors and maintains an acceptable ratio of councillor to electorate.

Key metrics and factors by criteria:
(2) Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks

Rushcliffe
Borough Council

Criteria	Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
2.1 Population of 500,000 or more as a guiding principle	Population size	Population of 500,000 or more as a guiding principles for all future unitary authorities.
2.2 Efficiencies to improve council finances and taxpayer value for money	Estimated savings through integration	No increase to the number of authorities delivering current upper tier services, enabling savings arising from economies of scale to be maximised
	Long term savings potential	Ability to take advantage of economies of scale in all future authorities and to invest in the transformation required to deliver service improvement and achieve long term financial sustainability.
	Avoiding duplication of statutory roles / management teams	No increase to the number of authorities delivering current upper tier services, on the basis that this does not introduce the need for additional statutory roles. Duplication of roles due to more authorities suggests the need to hire additional resources/management and relies on available expertise.
2.3 Transition costs and transformation opportunities	Transition costs and complexity	Minimising the complexity and costs associated with establishing new local authority structures
	Need for boundary reviews	Minimising the need to change existing boundaries, which is expected to be a time-consuming process for the boundary commission, with unprecedented levels of demand given the number of areas simultaneously going through local government reorganisation.
	Transformation opportunities	Scale and capacity within each new authority to deliver transformation and therefore service improvement and savings
2.4 Putting local government finances on a firmer financial footing	Non-earmarked reserves	Balanced between Unitaries, without any authorities at a level of reserves which would impact the ability to deal with financial shocks.
	Debt affordability - financing costs as % net revenue expenditure (NRE)	No unitaries exceeding 10% for debt financing as a percentage of net revenue expenditure. Whilst there is no single accepted level, 10% is sometimes quoted as a manageable level of financing costs as a percentage of net revenue expenditure (NRE). A balance of financing costs as a percentage of net revenue expenditure across authorities suggests a serviceable debt portfolio and prudence within capital financing.

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Key metrics and factors by criteria: (3) High quality and sustainable public services

Criteria	Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
3.1 Improving service delivery and avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation	Scale to deliver service improvement	Capacity and ability to operate at scale to support service delivery improvement and transformation across all future authorities.
	Forecast demand for key services	Balanced between unitaries, avoiding disproportionately high demand in each unitary which can lead to excessive pressure on key services, including Adult Social Care, Children's Services and SEND.
	Deprivation levels	Avoiding higher levels of deprivation and demand being clustered within individual unitaries Large differences would suggest areas with significant service delivery challenges, impacting resource allocation and financial planning.
	65+ Population	Balanced proportion of older people between unitaries, avoiding excessive pressure and strain on services in one area
	Avoiding service fragmentation	Avoiding splitting of current top tier service structures. Options should aim to minimise service fragmentation, which risks a reduction in service quality.
	Manageable geography for service delivery	Travel within all future unitary geographies is manageable for service delivery teams that allows service delivery to be conducted effectively.
3.2 Public service reform and better value for money	Predicted spend for key services	Manageable predicted spend for all unitaries and balanced between unitaries, avoiding disproportionately high spending in each unitary, which suggests excessive cost pressures.
	Enabling localism and place-based public service reform	Appropriate geography for service delivery and place based public service reform in each unitary. Place based public service reform will require the ability to operate in neighbourhoods and localities with community partners at a more local level than any proposed unitary geographies.
	Alignment with public service partner geographies	Configurations that do not split current public service delivery geographies will be able to work more efficiently and effectively together for the benefit of residents and communities.
3.3 Impact on crucial services such as social care, children's services, SEND and homelessness	Impacts on Adult Social Care services	Options should aim to minimise disruption and fragmentation of upper tier services where possible. Where there is a significant change, there should be a clear rationale for how quality of service delivery can be improved through delivering on the new footprint.
	Impact on Children's services	Options should aim to minimise disruption and fragmentation of upper tier services where possible. Where there is a significant change, there should be a clear rationale for how quality of service delivery can be improved through delivering on the new footprint.
	Impact on Special Educational Need & Disability (SEND) service delivery	Options should aim to minimise disruption and fragmentation of upper tier services where possible. Where there is a significant change, there should be a clear rationale for how quality of service delivery can be improved through delivering on the new footprint.
	Impact on Homelessness services	A joined-up approach which enables close working to with partners to prevent and tackle homelessness by responding to residents in need and securing effective supply

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Key metrics and factors by criteria: (4) Working together to understand and meet local needs

Criteria	Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
4.1 Local identity, culture and historical importance	Sense of identity	Unitary geographies reflects factors including culture, sense of place, common geographical features and historical links between areas.
	Travel to Work Areas (TTWA)	Unitary boundaries minimise splitting of existing TTWA areas. Unitary boundaries that align with established travel to work areas would represent areas where the majority of residents live and work, indicating a greater sense of place and community.
	Maintaining history and tradition	All unitary options should preserve local tradition and sense of history, in order to maintain important connections between communities and local government.
4.2 Views expressed through local engagement, and ability to address any concerns	Views expressed through engagement	Proposals should align as far as possible with the views expressed through engagement with both the public and partners. Where concerns are raised there should be confidence that these can be adequately mitigated.

Key metrics and factors by criteria:
(5) Supporting devolution arrangements

Criteria	Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
5.1 Sensible population ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority	**Population ratios between members of a strategic authority**	Balanced population ratio between all unitaries within a future strategic authority. Unitaries should seek balanced population sizes resulting in even power balance in authorities.

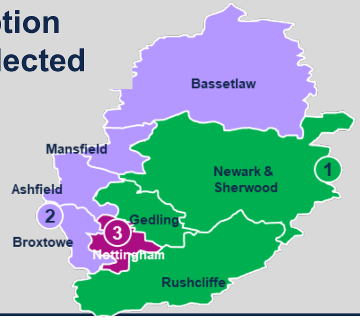
Key metrics and factors by criteria:
(6) Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment

Criteria	Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
6.1 Enabling strong community engagement	**Ability to deliver strong community engagement**	A manageable geographic area and appropriate level of scale (i.e. not too large) with the ability to meaningfully engage with local communities, enabling effective communication, and effective representation.

Appendix 4: Selecting a three unitary model

Rushcliffe
Borough Council

Selecting a three-unitary model

On several factors, the selected three unitary model was deemed to be score marginally higher than the alternative, largely based on balance.	**Option selected** 	**Option disregarded** 
Govt criteria		
1. Establishing a single tier of local government	• More balanced in terms of geographic area and population density • Slightly more balanced total GVA • Allows for clearer economic growth focus in each unitary authority (East Midlands Freeport in Rushcliffe and Fusion Power Plant in Bassetlaw)	
2. Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks	• Slightly more balanced in terms of population	
3. High quality and sustainable public services	• More balanced distribution of deprivation levels, 65+ population and homelessness • Good connectivity through the Robin Hood line which connects Bassetlaw to rest of “West” unitary. • More manageable geographics areas required for effective service delivery	
4. Working together to understand and meet local needs	No significant arguments noted either way	No significant arguments noted either way
5. Supporting devolution arrangements	• Slightly more balanced in terms of population, and representation in Strategic Authority	
6. Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment	• Could be argued that the more balanced geographic split gives the potential for better community engagement in each of the two new unitaries • Transport links (particularly Robin Hood rail line) connect Bassetlaw with Districts in the West.	• Could be argued that the smaller ‘West’ unitary is more grounded in a community, with Bassetlaw more similar to rural areas to the East of the county (identity)

Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Councils

Local Government Reorganisation

September 2025 - Option Bii (Composite Proposal) Comparative Analysis

Nottingham City Council

Contents

1. Executive Summary

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

This document provides an options analysis for local government reorganisation (LGR) in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It supports and builds on analysis undertaken to support the submission of an interim plan by the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils to MHCLG in March 2025, and subsequent detailed appraisal of shortlisted options against outcomes set out by the government.

Phase 1 (January - March 2025):

MHCLG officially set out their formal LGR criteria to all councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire on 5th February 2025, with supplementary guidance provided (in response to the interim plan) in June 2025.

Through independent analysis, engagement with Chief Executives and Section 151 officers, an options appraisal for future council arrangements in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire was developed. This led to the identification of three potential options for LGR (from a long list of eight) which, on agreement with the Leaders / Mayor were included within the interim plan submitted to Government.

Given the rapid timeframe, it was agreed that further work should be undertaken following the interim plan, including a range of activities to deepen the appraisal of the three options.

Phase 2 (May - June 2025):

In considering how each shortlisted option might satisfy the MHCLG criteria, it was agreed in May 2025 that the identified options should be further appraised through additional analysis against the government's framework. Additional analysis was therefore undertaken by officers through the development of thematic papers, drawing on internal and publicly available data.

The additional analysis particularly focussed on:

Sensible Economic Area
Sensible Geographic Area
Impact on Critical Services

Each of the three options offered different strengths and challenges. The additional analysis undertaken demonstrated that Option 2 is the least aligned, and that the differences in alignment between Options 1(b) and 1(e) were marginal.

Phase 3 (August - September 2025):

A composite option was developed by Nottingham City Council, to encompass parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe. This option has been assessed, reviewed, and compared against the other two options (1b and 1e) that have been progressed forwards for detailed financial review, along with option 1a as it bears close similarity to Bii (Composite Proposal).

Bii (Composite Proposal) has been compared to the other options through three lenses:

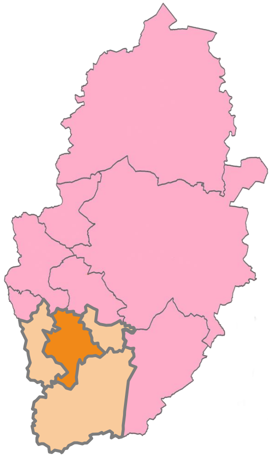
Financial Model (Phase 1)
Thematic Papers (Phase 2)
Comparative Analysis (Phase 1)

This review therefore compares a variety of quantitative factors, ranging from internal costs and benefits to local government, to external service delivery, and also to the level of socio-economic imbalance between the two regions.

Overview of Proposed Option

The proposed option Bii (Composite Proposal) creates a unique footprint, that extends beyond current district boundaries to encompass urban and suburban areas of Broxtowe, Gedling, and Rushcliffe, within the wider Nottingham City conurbation.

Proposed Option Bii (Composite Proposal)



Source: ONS	Conurbation	County
Current (2023)	612,557	561,213
Projected (2035)	660,520	604,125

Overview of Option

The previously articulated options (1a - 1f and 2) are not optimal in terms of planning for and delivering housing growth and economic growth.

The creation of two unitary authorities that have distinct footprints will enable one to focus on communities in and around **Nottingham city** and delivering services in an urban context as a conurbation. The **county authority** will be more focussed on delivering services and promoting inclusive growth across a polycentric geography of towns and villages.

The creation of a conurbation authority would seek to reflect how the city **functions** and ensure **local identity** is preserved. The ability to plan for **sustainable growth** and having financial capacity to meet needs and provide effective services will be crucial success factors, as well as being able to address Nottingham's historic 'under-bounding'.

MHCLG Criteria

MHCLG have issued guidance over boundary change which highlights that district footprints are the preferred *building blocks* for LGR proposals. However,options with boundary changes can be put forward, but government has set out that "there will need to be a strong public services and financial sustainability justification" for such proposals.

Guidance published by the LGA suggests two routes for government to consider a proposal which modifies district boundaries - as in the case of option Bii (Composite Proposal).

- Final proposal using district building blocks, with request for subsequent Principal Area Boundary Review (PABR) - Minister or new councils will request the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to incorporate this PABR into their work programme.
- Final proposal using district building blocks as best fit with request to minister to modify and implement new boundaries to achieve desired configuration.

Methodology and Approach

Three approaches were taken in order to assess option Bii (Composite Proposal) against the other options by deploying the same methodology for the appraisal of the existing shortlisted options. This approach allowed for an assessment that covers the internal financial viability, the impact on services, and the imbalance between the two regions.

Lens
A
Financial Viability

Financial Modelling

The financial modelling utilises a set of assumptions, built off the previous high level financial modelling, to estimate the benefits and costs to the authorities of reorganising. Certain costs are assumed to be higher under option Bii (Composite Proposal), affecting the net benefit after 7 years and also the payback period duration.

Lens
B
Thematic Papers Review

Review of key internally developed papers

This revolves around utilising the data provided in the thematic papers to approximate the likely outcomes under Bii (Composite Proposal). Topics include economic area, geographic area, and crucial services, in order to understand the impact on these services.

Lens
C
Comparative Analysis

Socio-economic factors analysis and comparison

This includes analysis of publicly available data to understand the geographic synergy of the two unitary authority options. Metrics consist of, but are not limited to, the proportion of rural and urban populations, average time to receive key services, debt to reserve ratios, and Council Tax take in relation to social care demand. This aims to find which options are likely to result in the establishment of two councils that are broadly balanced.

Summary of findings

This analysis shows that option Bii (Composite Proposal) can achieve the same level of benefits as options 1b and 1e and that there are marginal differences between all options as set out in the comparative analysis. The complexity of disaggregating services from existing district footprints is likely to incur additional one off transition costs. Option Bii (Composite Proposal) could provide greater coherence in service delivery for primarily rural and urban communities, and is similar in terms of the balance of geographic and economic indicators to option 1b & 1e.

Comparative analysis

All options being considered across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire footprint have marginal differences between them and would require some mitigations as part of implementation.

The comparative analysis indicates that Option Bii (Composite Proposal) performs similarly to Options 1b and 1e across most key metrics, suggesting it is comparable to these other options.

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) demonstrates strong balance in areas such as population projections, debt to reserve per capita, and deprivation.

More detailed work will be required through the development of a detailed financial case and full proposal to demonstrate that this option meets MHCLG's requirements to implement an option with varied district boundaries.

Thematic Papers Review

The review of thematic areas suggests that Option Bii (Composite Proposal) is broadly comparable to Options 1b and 1e on these domains, with several indicators pointing to stronger outcomes from a service delivery perspective.

In areas like Children's Social Care and SEND, Bii (Composite Proposal) presents a more even spread of demand. When analysing the economic and geographic areas, Bii (Composite Proposal) presents no significant material difference to 1b or 1e.

Overall, there is potential for Bii (Composite Proposal) to provide a configuration of local government that provides a viable model for service delivery and a distinctive remit for the respective urban-focused and rural-focused authorities that would be created.

Impact on financial analysis

The financial comparison highlights that whilst all options deliver the same annual benefits of £24.6 million (based on the analysis undertaken at this stage) options 1b & 1e are more financially efficient, with lower transition costs (£28.8 million), a shorter payback period of 1.3 years, and a higher net benefit of £64.7 million over five years.

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) has higher one-off transition costs (£31.6 million) arising from additional anticipated programme and design requirements due to the added complexity of change. There is therefore a longer payback period of 1.7 years and a lower net benefit of £62.0 million after 5 years.

It should also be noted that there may be additional financial complexities for the wider public service delivery system where partners currently organise or deliver services aligned to a district footprint.

Appraisal of options

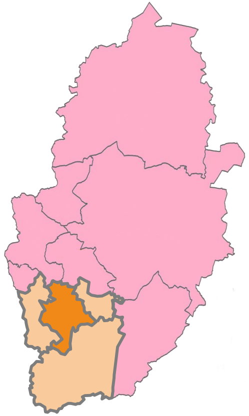
Additional analysis was completed focussed on MHCLG criteria for unitary local government, comparing option Bii (Composite Proposal) to 1b and 1e. This, and previous analysis, has informed the evaluation of each option against all MHCLG criteria. The analysis indicates that all three options put forward a configuration for local government that are likely, on balance, to address the criteria (with mitigations likely to be required in some instances). The RAG rating indicates relative alignment to the criteria among the options (those highlighted in pink are factors that allow for detailed comparative grading).

Criteria	Key factors	Option 1b	Option 1e	Option Bii
1 Sensible single tier of local government	*Establishes a single tier of Local Government for the whole of the area concerned* *Sensible economic area: with a tax base which does not create undue inequalities* *Sensible geographic area: which will help increase housing supply and meet local needs*	Medium	High	High
2 'Right-sized' local government	*A population of 500,000 or more (unless specific scenarios make this unreasonable)* *Supports efficiencies and value for money for council taxpayers* *Improves capacity and supports the council to withstand financial shocks* *Manageable transition costs*	High	High	Medium
3 High quality, sustainable services	*Improves local government & service delivery, avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation* *Opportunity for public service reform including where this will lead to improved value for money* *Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk to negative impact on crucial services*	High	Medium	High
4 Meets local needs	*Meets local needs and is informed by local views* *Improves / mitigates risk to issues of local identity, cultural and historic importance* *Addresses local concerns*	High	Medium	Medium
5 Supports devolution arrangements	*Helps to support devolution arrangements / unlock devolution* *Sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority*	High	High	High
6 Local engagement and empowerment	*Enables stronger community engagement* *Delivers genuine opportunities for neighbourhood empowerment*	Medium	Medium	Medium

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of Option Bii (Composite Proposal)

Set out below is further rationale to underpin the comparative RAG rating against the MHCLG criteria for option Bii (Composite Proposal). For those areas which carry a "medium" amber rating, specific areas of difference compared with option 1b and 1e are highlighted, but which could be contextualised or mitigated through the development of a narrative and evidence base for a full proposal to government.

Bii **Two Unitary Authorities:** Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Conurbation



Alignment to MHCLG criteria

H M L

Criteria	Areas of strength and suggested further development
Criteria 1	• **Strengths:** strong alignment with sensible geography and economic area criteria.
Criteria 2	• **Strengths:** retains balanced projected population levels (with c.51k higher projected population in the conurbation authority). • **Areas for development:** There are higher transition costs than under 1(b) or 1(e) due to the proposed division of existing district boundaries through reorganisation. Specifically, additional programme and engagement capacity, and external design and implementation support are likely to be required to manage the transition and realise the financial benefits.
Criteria 3	• **Strengths:** Provides a balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND. Creates two distinct areas enabling tailored and specialised service delivery models in line with local population needs and contexts.
Criteria 4	• **Strengths:** Combines portions of authorities that are the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings. • **Areas for development:** Approach to managing any complexities arising from disaggregating services currently delivered at a district footprint, and allaying any local concerns that may arise as a result of different areas within Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe aligning to different unitary authorities.
Criteria 5	• **Strengths:** Combined authority already exists within the Nottingham City conurbation and meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (661k for Nottingham Conurbation and 604k for Nottinghamshire by 2035).
Criteria 6	• **Strengths:** Similar clustering of Mosaic segments and some overlap with Hospital Trusts and Nottingham City Council boundaries; delineation between urban and rural areas may offer new opportunities for neighbourhood empowerment. • **Areas for development:** New local fora and channels may be required to effectively engage communities.

Definition of RAG ratings

High

A green rating shows a high congruence with MHCLG criteria. It is expected that this would be an advantageous element to set out in a full proposal.

Medium

An amber rating shows good degree of alignment with MHCLG criteria, but where additional rationale, detail, mitigation, or explanation may be beneficial when developing a full proposal.

Low

A red rating shows a low congruence with MHCLG criteria. It is expected that this will not meet the criteria required for MHCLG to approve this option.

Next steps

The below timetable articulates the key deadlines relating to local government reorganisation within the region, and what should happen in order to progress option Bii forwards.

Timeline

1 **12th September 2025 - Comparative options appraisal**
The draft report, covering a high level options appraisal of option Bii (Composite Proposal), is issued.

2 **28th November 2025 - Submission to MHCLG**
A proposal, along with a full business case, is due to be submitted to MHCLG by the 28th November.

3 **Early 2026 - Feedback from MHCLG**
Feedback is provided by MHCLG, ensuring final proposals include clear rationale, financial assessments, and evidence of public engagement.

4 **April 2027 - Shadow Authority established**
Shadow authorities will be formed and take responsibility of the future Council over the year ahead, before vesting day.

5 **April 2028 - Vesting Day**
New unitary authorities will formally take control over all responsibilities.

Areas for development

- An **internal decision** needs to be reached about the viability of option Bii (Composite Proposal), and whether it should be progressed forwards to develop a full business case and proposal for submission to MHCLG.
- **External stakeholders** should be engaged, to inform them of the plan and proposal. Feedback gathered can be used in the drafting of the proposal.
- A **detailed financial analysis** of option Bii (Composite Proposal) will be needed, in order to effectively compare it as an option to 1b and 1e. These two options are currently being developed through detailed financial modelling.
- Once the modelling has been completed, a **business case and proposal** needs to be drafted, reviewed and approved, for submission to MHCLG by 28th November.

2. Background & Context

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

This document provides an options analysis for local government reorganisation (LGR) in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It support and builds on analysis undertaken to support the submission of an interim plan by the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils to MHCLG in March 2025.

Phase 1 (January - March 2025):

MHCLG officially set out their formal LGR criteria to all councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire on 5th February 2025, with supplementary guidance provided (in response to the interim plan) in June 2025.

Through independent analysis, engagement with Chief Executives and Section 151 officers, an options appraisal for future council arrangements in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire was developed. This led to the identification of three potential options for LGR (from a long list of eight) which, on agreement with the Leaders / Mayor were included within the interim plan submitted to Government.

Given the rapid timeframe, it was agreed that further work should be undertaken following the interim plan, including a range of activities to deepen the appraisal of the three options.

Phase 2 (May - June 2025):

In considering how each shortlisted option might satisfy the MHCLG criteria, it was agreed in May 2025 that the identified options should be further appraised through additional analysis against the government's framework. Additional analysis was therefore undertaken by officers through the development of thematic papers, drawing on internal and publicly available data.

The additional analysis particularly focussed on:

Sensible Economic Area
Sensible Geographic Area
Impact on Critical Services

Each of the three options offered different strengths and challenges. The additional analysis undertaken demonstrated that Option 2 is the least aligned, and that the differences in degree of alignment between Options 1(b) and 1(e) were marginal.

Phase 3 (August - September 2025):

An alternative option was developed by Nottingham City Council, to encompass parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe. This option has been assessed, reviewed, and compared against the other two options (1b and 1e) that have been progressed forwards for detailed financial review, along with option 1a as it bears close similarity to Bii (Composite Proposal) .

This option, Bii (Composite Proposal), has been compared options through three lens:

Financial Model (Phase 1)
Thematic Papers (Phase 2)
Comparative Analysis (Phase 1)

This review therefore compares a variety of quantitative factors, ranging from internal costs and benefits to local government, to external service delivery, and also to the level of socio-economic imbalance between the two regions.

National Policy Context

MHCLG have published set criteria against which all proposals should meet. In addition, they have released information when considering amending district boundaries.

MHCLG Criteria on proposals

1	**Establishing a single tier of government for the whole area:** Proposals should feature a sensible economic area with an appropriate tax base, and a suitable geographic area for housing plans.
2	**Improve efficiencies, capacity and withstand financial shocks:** Financial standing should be improved, and regions should aim for ~500,000 people.
3	**Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality & sustainable public services to civilians:** Proposals should improve service delivery and minimise impact.
4	**Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed of local views**
5	**New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements:** Proposals should document the plans and intentions for future interaction with a Combined Authority, if relevant.
6	**New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment:** Proposals will need to document how communities will be engaged.

MHCLG Guidance on redrawing boundaries

- **Boundary changes are possible**, however “existing district areas should be considered the building blocks for proposals”.
- **A strong justification** in terms of financial sustainability and public service delivery is required for MHCLG to consider more complex boundary changes.
- Any boundary changes proposed should be **clear in the final proposal**, whether parish or ward boundary, or if creating new boundaries, by attaching a map.
- Any boundary changes should ensure they meet the **overarching criteria** for all proposals.
- Boundary change can be implemented at the same time as structural change, however proposals can use existing district building blocks, before requesting a Principal Area Boundary Review (PABR) at a later date.

Local Policy Context

The previously articulated and assessed options focus on redrawing boundaries utilising current district boundaries. This alternative option sets a new geographic footprint which seeks to align to local community areas and more specifically urban areas rather than maintain the existing district boundaries.

Option limitations

All options being considered across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire footprint would require mitigations as part of implementation. Summaries of the relative benefits and alignment to the LGR framework have been set out in the interim plan submission to Government*.

Geographical patterns about how residents live and organisations work are important for the delivery of services as are the need for further growth and housing delivery and the analysis of option 1b (ii) more closely aligns to the ‘sensible economic area’ criteria. The options proposed (1b and 1e) align Nottingham with Broxtowe and either Gedling or Rushcliffe councils and it has already been identified that some mitigations would be needed in order to deliver the housing and economic growth required.

*https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s169382/3.%20Local%20Government%20Reorganisation.pdf

Vision and Logic

The creation of two unitary authorities that have distinct footprints will enable one to focus on enabling expansion of the existing urban areas of Nottingham city and delivering services in an urban context. The county authority will be more focussed on delivering services and promoting inclusive growth across a polycentric geography of revitalised towns and buoyant villages.

Through the creation of a city-focussed authority, it will reflect how the city functions and ensure local identity is preserved. It will enable planning for sustainable growth and would have the financial capacity to meet needs and provide effective services. This proposed authority would be able to address Nottingham’s historic ‘under-bounding’.

An option with boundaries that correlate closely to how individuals interact with services can help set a landscape for effective implementation and service reorganisation.

Option Bii (Composite Proposal)

Redrawing the district boundaries of the neighbouring Gedling, Rushcliffe, and Broxtowe regions would deliver this vision.

This option would include all of Gedling, with the exception of Bestwood St Albans, Calverton, Dumbles, and Newstead Abbey.

It would include all of Rushcliffe, with the exception of Bingham North, Bingham South, Cranmer, Cropwell, East Bridgford, Nevile & Langar, and Newton.

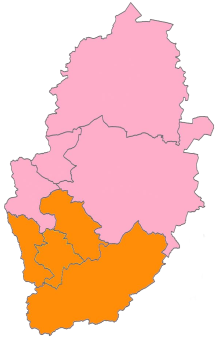
Finally, all of Broxtowe, with the exception of Eastwood Hall, Eastwood Hilltop, Eastwood St Mary's, Brinsley, and Greasley would be included.

A map is included on the following page.

Proposed option for consideration

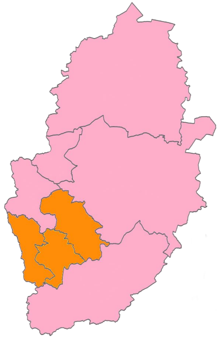
For the purpose of this appraisal, Bii (Composite Proposal) will be compared against options 1b and 1e, as these options remain under active consideration and development. 1a has also been compared against as this option coheres most closely to that put forward in Bii (Composite Proposal).

Option 1a



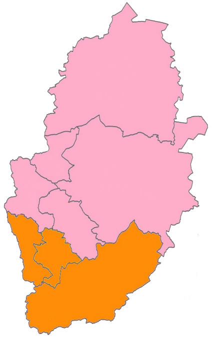
Population	
City + Gedling + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	684,865
Notts County + Remaining LAs	488,905

Option 1b



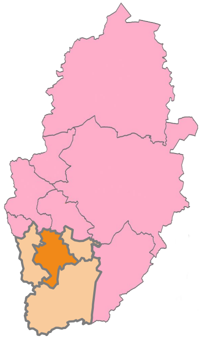
Population	
City + Gedling + Broxtowe	561,011
Notts County + Remaining LAs	612,759

Option 1e



Population	
City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302
Notts County + Remaining LAs	607,468

Option Bii (Composite Proposal)



Population	
City + portions of Gedling + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	612,557
Notts County + Remaining LAs	561,213

In summary…

Four structural options are proposed for Nottingham City Council's Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), each presenting different population splits. To support assessment against criteria 2 (sensible population levels), the summary highlights how each option stacks up in broad terms. Options 1a and Bii (Composite Proposal) share similar population figures, while Options 1b and 1e suggest alternative configurations. Geographic coverage is noted but not the primary focus. Some figures may differ from previous findings due to PwC’s population approximations. District level figures are sourced from ONS 2023, ward level figures for Bii (Composite Proposal) have been proxied through ONS mid-2021 data.

3. Impact on financial analysis

Financial Modelling: Methodology

The previous options analysis utilised a financial analysis model to compare the potential benefits and costs posed by each option. This analysis is primarily based on publicly available outturn data, information from each council's own transparency data, or by applying changes which have been demonstrated across previous LGR proposals.Information highlighted in green displays benefits for the client and those in yellow visualise costs.

Third-party spend refers to all payments made by local councils for goods and services from external suppliers, excluding grants, taxations, and other charges. Addressable spend is the portion of this expenditure that can be influenced through procurement or commissioning strategies such as negotiating contracts or seeking competitive bids. In contrast, non-addressable spend includes costs that are less flexible and mandated by law, making them harder to influence.

Property expenditure relates to the cost associated with acquiring, maintaining, and managing both **operational** properties (used for delivering council services) and **investment** properties (held for income or capital appreciation). This includes expense such as maintenance, utilities, insurance and management fees.

FTE is calculated as a proportion of spend as supplied in public spending data. **Net revenue expenditure** is used to avoid double-counting any income or grant transfers. **Senior leadership** salaries are calculated across the top three organisational tiers as per transparency reporting.

Staff	Third party spend	Property	Democracy
Senior leadership	Non-addressable		Councillor allowances
Front office FTE	Addressable		Election costs
District service delivery FTE			
Back office FTE			

Increased benefits across Staff and Third Party Spend

Redundancy costs	Programme transition costs	Transformation costs

Reduced benefits for multiple unitary transition	Increased costs for multiple unitary transition	**Disaggregation Costs** Duplicated delivery and structures

Member allowances are based on rates of Basic and Special Responsibility payments published in transparency reporting. These costs are used to determine the likely cost of one or more new democratic structures in new authorities

Election costs use a total of votes cast in a previous election cycle across all council elections, and a cost-per-vote of £3 calculated by the Electoral Commission

Benefits are profiled to be fully effective in Year 3, to account for the need to complete staff changes and undertake contract renegotiations.

Redundancy costs do not include actuarial strain as this is highly individualised. A payment of 30% of salary is assumed.

Costs such as the creation of new councils, marketing, ICT and consultation are increased proportionately where more than one new council is to be formed. Similarly, fixed **benefits of transition** are shared across all new bodies.

Transition costs include anticipated redundancies due to duplicated leadership structures, and elements of one-off spending relating to creating, marketing and programme managing transition to a new council.

Disaggregation Costs are incurred where an option involves dividing a county level authority into two or more unitaries, and represents the ongoing cost of duplicating management and operations of statutory services, including social care, education and public health. **An element of disaggregated costs therefore recur each year in options with more than one unitary authority**

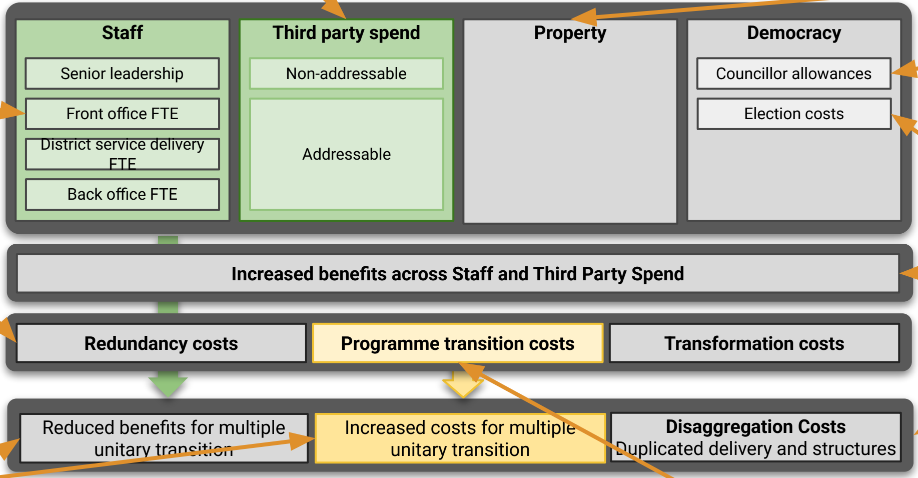
Financial Modelling: Proposed impact of Bii (Composite Proposal) on model

This appraisal has considered whether any changes to the model are required to be able to compare the existing “2UA” options with an option which proposes forming two Unitary Authorities through amending district borders. The areas of the model where the configuration proposed by option Bii (Composite Proposal) has a material impact over the existing shortlisted options are summarised in colour, with unaffected elements of the model in grey.

It has been assumed that there are additional costs attributable to **third party spend** under the Bii (Composite Proposal) option. This is due to the fact that any contracts held by Gedling, Rushcliffe, and Broxtowe District Councils will need to renegotiated, terminated, or even re-procured. This additional cost has been reflected under the additional internal programme management.

For savings realised through **property expenditure**, they have been assumed to remain the same. Amending District borders should not pose a greater or reduced opportunity to consolidate property.

As the model examines the overall savings across the region and future authorities, the savings from **FTE reduction** have remained the same under option Bii (Composite Proposal). However, the ability to realise these reductions through aggregation may be affected by a model which divides existing district boundaries in the formation of new unitaries.



As the **member allowances** relate to the Basic and Special Responsibility payments to the councillors and members, these will not be impacted under option Bii (Composite Proposal).

The savings from **election costs** will not be impacted. There are still the same number of elections being abolished.

Benefits have been modelled under the same **phasing**, and will be fully realised by year 3.

Redundancy costs are assumed to be 30% of the FTE savings. As FTE savings do not change, redundancy costs will not be impacted under option Bii (Composite Proposal).

Disaggregation Costs are incurred where an option involves dividing a county level authority into two or more unitaries. This is not impacted by dividing across district borders. As such, these are the same under option Bii (Composite Proposal).

Certain costs relating to the formation of new councils have been assumed to be higher. This includes costs relating to the **registration of new councils**, due to the redrawing of boundaries, and **comms and marketing**, due to the added complexity of redrawn boundaries.

Other costs, including **ICT** and **consultation** have been assumed to remain the same.

Transition costs relate to the one off costs of managing the transition to the new council. Due to the added complexity, costs relating to the **external transition, design, and implementation support** and the **internal programme management** are higher under option Bii (Composite Proposal). In addition, the **contingency** will also increase, in order to reflect the unknown potential impact of the additional complexity. It has been assumed that the other transition costs are not impacted under this option.

Overview of assumptions (1/2)

The table below identifies the key assumptions underpinning different aspects of the financial model to quantify the potential costs and benefits of different options. There are no differences on the assumptions listed on this page for option Bii (Composite Proposal) , compared to options 1a, 1b, or 1e.

Area	Assumption	Key Figure	
		Option 1a, 1b and 1e	Option Bii
Benefits of aggregation: Staff	Proportion of net revenue expenditure spent on staff	31.33%	
	Front Office FTE	36%	
	Service Delivery FTE	37%	
	Back Office FTE	27%	
	Reduction in front office FTE	4%	
	Reduction in service delivery FTE	1.5%	
	Reduction in back-office FTE	3%	
	Reduction in senior leadership costs	£8,681,498	
Benefits of aggregation: Third party spend	Proportion of net expenditure spent on third parties	65.7%	
	Proportion of third party spend (TPS) which is addressable	75%	
	Reduction in third party spend	1.5%	
Benefits of aggregation: Property	Proportion of net expenditure spent on property	3%	
	Reduction in property spend	12.5%	
Benefits of aggregation: Democracy	District SRA and base allowances incurred as part of the democratic structure	£351,915	
	Annual cost incurred per District election	£165,530	
	Cost per vote during an election	£3.00	

Overview of assumptions (2/2)

The below lists the assumed values that are proposed to use to modify the financial model for the comparative analysis. Any assumption for Bii (Composite Proposal) that differs from 1b and 1e is in bold and highlighted in yellow. This indicates that the primary area where option Bii (Composite Proposal) has a material difference compared with other 2UA options is in increased transition costs.

Area	Assumption	Key Figure	
		Option 1a, 1b & 1e	Option Bii
Aggregation and Disaggregation Costs	Proportion of additional FTE undertaking service delivery management & supervision	0%	
	Additional senior leadership costs	0%	
	Members in upper tier local authorities	121	
	Member base allowance	£1,088,297	
	SRA costs per new unitary authority	£0	
Costs of Transition	Redundancy cost as a proportion of salary	30%	
	External communications, rebranding and implementation	**£732,000**	**£823,500**
	External transition, design and implementation support costs	**£8,540,000**	**£9,607,500**
	Additional programme management costs of disaggregating services	£0	
	Internal programme management	**£3,806,400**	**£4,282,200**
	Creating the new council	**£1,220,000**	**£1,372,500**
	Contingency	**£6,775,853**	**£7,726,489**
	Organisation Closedown	£305,000	
	Public consultation	£411,750	
	Information, Communication & Technology (ICT) costs	£2,385,000	
	Shadow Chief Exec/ Member costs	£622,200	

Rationale for changes to assumptions

For each assumption that has changed from Option 1b and 1e, the explanation and rationale for the number has been displayed in the table below. This table has applied a 12.5% uplift to indicate what an applied change would be against individual cost areas under the model.

Area	Assumption	Key Figure		Rationale
		Option 1a, 1b and 1e	Option Bii	
Costs of Transition	External communications, rebranding and implementation	£732,000	£823,500	In order to effectively communicate to residents, businesses, and individuals, there will need to be an additional cost of approximately 2 FTE to conduct targeted engagement with specific areas affected by boundaries being redrawn. A **12.5%** uplift from options 1b and 1e has been used.
	External transition, design and implementation support costs	£8,540,000	£9,607,500	Due to the complexity, it is likely that additional external support will be required. In addition, the added costs originating from renegotiating, terminating, and re-procuring contracts in the short term has been reflected in this assumption. A **12.5%** uplift from options 1b and 1e has been applied here.
	Internal programme management	£3,806,400	£4,282,200	This equates to the internal comms to staff, management of the project, as well as designing of future services, operating models and subsequent realignment of staff into the new unitary authorities. This will involve considerable engagement with key stakeholders, as well as approvals and confirmation from senior leadership.A **12.5%** uplift has been applied from the 1b and 1e scenario.
	Creating the new council	£1,220,000	£1,372,500	There is an estimated additional cost of approximately 2 - 3 FTE. This will relate specifically to the additional processes of engaging with LGBCE (e.g. provision of data and facilitating engagement and consultation requirements), to facilitate the redrawing of new unitary boundaries. A **12.5%** uplift from options 1b and 1e has been applied.
	Contingency	£6,775,853	£7,726,489	The contingency will increase due to the additional costs identified, and the added complexity of this option. As such, a **12.5%** uplift is applied to account for these unknown costs.

Impact on costs

Under Option Bii (Composite Proposal), the formation of two unitary authorities with amended district boundaries will have an impact on costs. Recent LGR exercises suggest considerations around any existing cross-boundary shared service arrangements are a particular driver of complexity.

Disaggregation costs

There are **no additional costs arising from disaggregation** in any of the two Unitary Authority options proposed. Disaggregation costs relate to any recurring costs associated with reorganisation which would require *additional* expenditure over and above existing unitary/upper tier arrangements.

In particular, they are born out of three areas, namely, the need for **senior leadership**, the need for **management** of **service delivery** teams, and the need for a **democratic structure**.

Under all of the two unitary authority options, it has been assumed that the cost of the senior leadership structure at Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County will remain. As such, there is no additional costs arising from the need to create with creating a new senior leadership team.

This is also true for the management of service delivery teams. There is no additional cost as it has been assumed that existing management structures will remain in place.

Finally, the existing upper tier democratic structure has also been assumed to remain, with the same number of members and associated costs.

If an option proposed forming **three unitary authorities**, there would be **disaggregation costs** due to the additional structures needed.

Service disaggregation

There are few cases of local government reorganisation that span across unitary and non-unitary authorities, especially for areas that redrew boundaries. As such, there is little evidence to understand and estimate the level of costs.

An assumption has been made, utilising a 12.5% uplift for any **transition** costs that could be impacted by the additional complexity of dividing districts. This 12.5% is a similar figure used by other authorities currently undergoing local government reorganisation where a “split district” option is being proposed in the formation of two new unitary authorities.

Whilst there is very limited precedent for reorganisations that involve dividing district boundaries, some recent examples highlight that reorganisation can require the reconfiguration, and - in some cases, dissolution of shared service agreements and procured third party provisions. The reconfiguration of local government arrangements in Northamptonshire, for instance, led to the need to dissolve shared service agreements with neighbouring district authorities.

These costs have been reflected in the assumptions developed for option Bii (Composite Proposal).

Indicative financial comparisons

An initial financial comparison has been prepared for the Bii (Composite Proposal) option, on the basis of the financial analysis, methodology and assumptions applied previously shared, tested and talked through with s151 officers. This shows that it is likely to take slightly - but not significantly - longer to recoup the enhanced transition costs posed by this option.

	Transition costs (£)	Annual benefits (£)	Net benefit after five years (£ total)	Payback period (years)
Option 1: 1(b) & 1(e)	£28,848,294	£24,620,878	£64,711,043	1.3
Option Bii: Nottingham City, Rushcliffe (exc. Eastwood), urban Gedling wards and S&W Rushcliffe	£31,586,230	£24,620,878	***£61,973,107***	***1.7***

Financial Modelling: Phasing of costs and benefits

The review has indicated a potential reduction in realisable benefits through additional transition costs, particularly to achieve third party spend reductions. This information does not propose that this affects the phasing of benefits and costs from the original analysis.

Impact of Phasing

In modelling the impact of costs and benefits, assumptions have been made to reflect their realistic phasing. This ensures that one-off costs are spread over multiple years rather than being incurred immediately, alongside the ongoing costs of transition.

Benefits are phased over a 3 year period, recognising that some efficiencies - such as senior leadership reductions - can be realised quickly, while others, like contract realignment and third-party spend savings, will take longer to achieve. This approach accounts for operational complexities, contract obligations, and the time required for full implementation.

It is important to note that the benefits outlined here relate solely to system aggregation, rather than service transformation. The efficiencies modelled do not include potential improvements from broader service redesign, which would be considered separately.

The phasing of the annualised **benefits** is over three years, due to the varying timescales for different aspects of delivery, after 3 years the full annual benefit is assumed. This includes ongoing cost reduction programs, the timing of the next election, and the expiry of third-party contracts. Transformation benefits have not been included.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4 -10
Benefits *(cumulative)*	30%	50%	100%	100%
Transition Costs *(one-off)*	30%	30%	30%	10%
Disaggregation Costs	***No disaggregation cost***			

Transition costs are spread over a longer period rather than being completed within a single year, ensuring a more realistic and feasible approach. Costs are incurred over three years, with Years 2 and 3 primarily covering recontracting, system migrations, workforce adjustments, and other transition-related expenditures. This phased approach accounts for contractual constraints, the complexity of workforce changes, and the time required to reorganise services, reducing financial risk and operational disruption.

Disaggregation costs arise from splitting county services into new councils, leading to ongoing expenses for duplicated leadership and operations but excluding service delivery costs.

4. Thematic Papers Review

Methodology

To support the more detailed appraisal of shortlisted options, thematic papers were produced by officers across the authorities covering key policy domains and critical services. These papers and the data collated within them, have been reviewed and analysed to understand the impact of option Bii (Composite Proposal).

Introduction to Thematic Papers

Thematic papers were reviewed in order to understand how options 1b, 1e, and 2 has previously been appraised. These thematic papers have been produced internally. In total, seven papers were reviewed:

1. Critical Services: Adult Social Care
2. Critical Services: Children Social Care
3. Critical Services: SEND Provision
4. Critical Services: Homelessness
5. Critical Services: Public Safety
6. Sensible Economic Area
7. Sensible Geographic Area

From here, hypotheses were developed and tested in order to understand whether option Bii (Composite Proposal) would pose a material difference when compared with options 1b or 1e.

Approach

Through reviewing the papers, it was found that there was no material difference between options 1b and 1e regarding homelessness and public safety. As such, there would be no material difference between these options and Bii (Composite Proposal), and therefore have not been included in the findings here.

The thematic papers contained a variety of qualitative and quantitative data. Where possible, quantitative data was used, through a proxy measurement of population (ONS ward level data), to understand how the service would be impacted under option Bii (Composite Proposal). In order to compare results fairly, measures for option 1a were also calculated, either using specific figures provided in the paper, or through proxy measurements based on population.

On each page, the thematic paper is introduced and briefly surmised, before insight and analysis is applied to the findings. Options which identify a low degree of imbalance between the two regions have been deemed as preferential. As this data has been developed utilising proxy estimates, in order to identify precise metrics, additional district-level data granularity is required.

For the avoidance of doubt, a shorthand has been developed:
City +: Nottingham City and any other districts
County: The remaining LAs and regions not included in the other option.
Con.: Conurbation; the areas of Nottingham City, Broxtowe, Gedling, and Rushcliffe to be merged under option Bii (Composite Proposal).

Critical Services: Adult Social Care

In terms of Adult Social Care, option Bii (Composite Proposal) will produce an outcome with a balance between the two regions that is comparable to the other options.

What did the papers find?

Overall, the paper identified that contracts, assets, and services are not equally distributed across the region or by population, and that significant work will be required to manage this risk during transition.

The assessment found that although there is a risk posed to service quality posed by disaggregating services, there is no greater risk when comparing 1b and 1e.

1b was found to be more balanced than 1e in terms of numbers of self-funders. It was also more advantageous for strategic and operational needs. Given that Broxtowe and Gedling are more densely populated than Rushcliffe, there is closer alignment for service delivery between Nottingham City and these two districts, rather than expanding into Rushcliffe.

Insight from findings

Combining projected social care spend for adults and childrens compared with to council tax receipts suggests that Bii (Composite Proposal) would produce a closer degree of balance than under any other option. Across both regions, there are high levels of spend compared to Council Tax receipts. Additional income sources such as grants can be explored to ensure financial sustainability. For further detail on this ratio please refer to the appendix.

Under option Bii (Composite Proposal), the Conurbation will see a higher spend and also number of people receiving long term support, when compared to 1b and 1e.

This Conurbation may align closer to the strategic and operational needs, as the conurbation focuses specifically on the urban areas of Broxtowe, Gedling, and Rushcliffe.

Metric		Combined social care spend to council tax (2032/33)	ASC spending (2032/33)	People receiving social care (2023)
1a	City +	0.84	£211.3m	10,228
	County	0.98	£190.5m	7,960
1b	City +	0.94	£177.0m	8,891
	County	0.87	£224.8m	9,297
1e	City +	0.87	£173.4m	8,605
	County	0.92	£228.4m	9,583
Bii	**Con.**	**0.94**	**£188.7m**	**9,330**
	County	**0.93**	**£213.1m**	**8,858**

*Key: **City +**: Nottingham City, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling*
***Con**: The % of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling + City*

Critical Services: Children's Social Care

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) appears to provide the most equal option in terms of spending and demand for Children's social Care support.

What did the papers find?

As an entirety, the previous assessment concluded that whilst dividing services poses a risk to quality, this risk is not significantly larger in either Option 1b or 1e. On the contrary, Option 1b was discovered to offer a more balanced distribution of elements, including demand and resource, which attained better alignment with strategic and operational needs.

The analysis highlighted that Broxtowe and Gedling share higher levels of need around abuse, substance misuse and safeguarding with Nottingham City in comparison to Rushcliffe. Additionally, Gedling's proximity and integration with City's postcodes suggests stronger alignment for service delivery as observed by their school attendance patterns.

As a result Option 1b presents a more favourable approach for an expanded city unitary authority supporting delivering CSC.

Insight from findings

As with ASC, the spend to council tax receipts is higher than expected under this option. Further detail can be found in the appendix.

If Option Bii (Composite Proposal) is selected to move forward with, the CSC spend on the city / conurbation would be higher than under option 1b or 1e, due to higher demand.

There is a 211 difference between the Conurbation and County under option Bii (Composite Proposal), thereby producing a greater degree of balance than under 1b and 1e. If preferring an option which minimises imbalance between the two regions, this option could be considered.

This option would align with 1b in terms of strategic and operational delivery, as this region seeks to identify the urban population of the region.

Metric		Combined social care spend to council tax (2032/33)	CSC spending (2032/33)	People receiving social care (2023)
1a	City +	0.84	£185.2m	3,577
	County	0.98	£159.3m	3,166
1b	City +	0.94	£160.4m	3,084
	County	0.87	£184.1m	3,659
1e	City +	0.87	£158.3m	3,042
	County	0.92	£186.2m	3,701
Bii	**Con.**	**0.94**	**£169.6m**	**3,266**
	County	**0.93**	**£174.9m**	**3,477**

*Key: **City +**: Nottingham City, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling*
***Con**: The % of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling + City*

Critical Services: SEND

As with Social Care, option Bii (Composite Proposal) produces a fairly balanced outcome for SEND provision across the region when compared with options 1b and 1e.

What did the papers find?

The thematic paper that assessed SEND services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire found that 1b would be more suitable than 1e.

Both options are closely aligned with the overall aims of LGR, with demand balanced well between the two regions. However, the levels of demand are significantly lower in Rushcliffe, and this could therefore present challenges stemming from an imbalance in income and demand for services.

Overall, the key risk for all options relates to the sufficiency of specialist SEND provision. This could be mitigated against through joint work during the shadow authority, however due to the imbalance under option 1e, the impact may be greater than under option 1b.

Insight from findings

In order to compare 1b and 1e against 1a and Bii (Composite Proposal), the overall numbers were proxied utilising population data.

1a presents the greatest demand imbalance between the conurbation and county. Under option Bii (Composite Proposal), the approximated numbers show that there will be a greater demand imbalance when compared to 1b, however Bii (Composite Proposal) is more balanced than that of 1e.

By extending the conurbation to include only the urban areas of Gedling, Broxtowe, and Rushcliffe, this region may be able to mitigate against risks associated with service delivery.

As with 1b and 1e, it is likely there is a risk relating to specialist provision, especially during the transition.

Metric		Number of initial requests for an EHC Plan (2024)	New EHC Plans issued (2024)	Number of children subject of an EHC Plan (Jan 2025)
1a	City +	1,340	928	4,276
	County	956	662	3,052
1b	City +	1,131	731	3,611
	County	1,165	859	3,717
1e	City +	1,038	629	3,326
	County	1,258	961	4,002
Bii	**Con.**	**1,201**	**832**	**3,833**
	County	**1,095**	**758**	**3,495**

*Key: **City +**: Nottingham City, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling*
***Con**: The % of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling + City*

Sensible Economic Area (1/2)

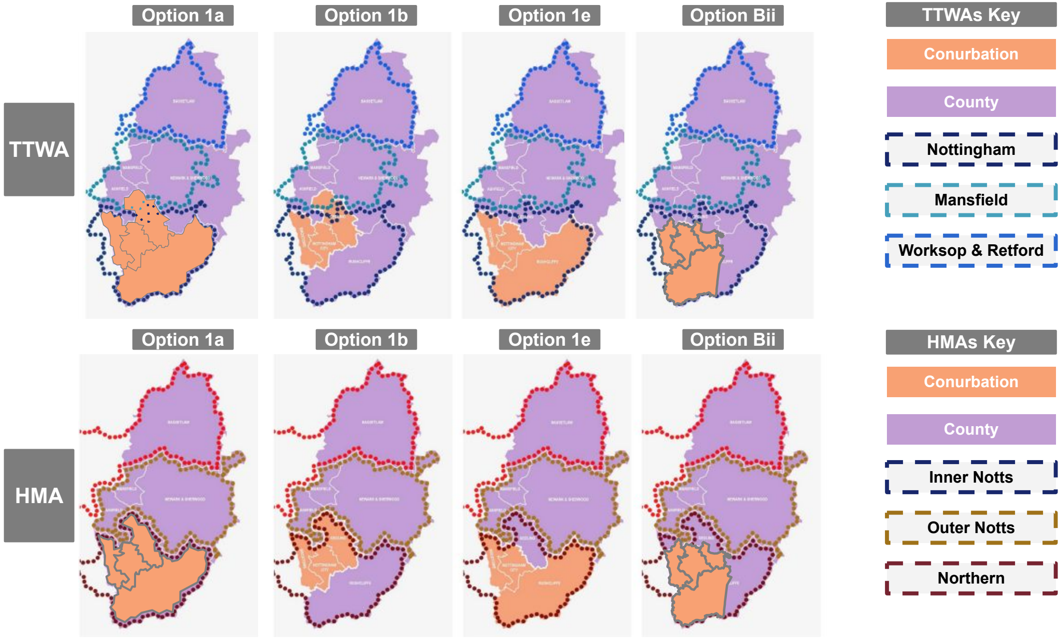
The findings from the original thematic papers are summarised here, with additional insight and analysis from the findings on the next page.

What did the papers originally find?

The Economic Area thematic paper assessed the options through a variety of metrics, including alignment to Travel To Work Areas (TTWAs) and Housing Market Areas (HMAs). Other metrics, including catchment areas for hospitals and key socio-economic areas, were also investigated.

TTWAs have been developed by the ONS to recognise self-contained areas where people live and work, and HMAs have been developed by MHCLG to identify the optimal areas within which planning for housing should be carried out. These areas are overlaid on top of the different boundaries under each option on the maps opposite, with the full findings on the next page.

Overall, the original paper found that option 1b would create a more urban-focused City authority and a rural County authority, with greater disparity in deprivation and income between the two. Option 1e would shift the City authority to a more rural profile, and would slightly improve alignment with TTWA and HMA geographies. It would reduces disparity between authorities, but introduce more internal inequality within the City authority.



Sensible Economic Area (2/2)

Through utilising insight and analysis of the TTWAs and HMAs, it was found that Option Bii (Composite Proposal) is broadly more aligned to both metrics than the other options, specifically for the areas around Nottingham.

Insight from findings

Through calculating the numbers of people within each TTWA and HMA, populations of each district were proxied to develop an estimate of comparable metrics.

These metrics allow for an understanding about alignment to a TTWA or HMA. 85.75% of the Inner Nottingham HMA would reside in Nottingham City under option 1a, and this number would reduce down to 76.74% under Bii (Composite Proposal) .

By comparing these metrics, option Bii (Composite Proposal) delivers an overall closer alignment to these factors than 1b and 1e, across both HMAs and TTWAs. Whilst the alignment to the Mansfield TTWA is worse under Bii (Composite Proposal) compared to 1a and 1b, this difference is slight, especially when compared to the benefits in the Nottingham TTWA.

HMA Analysis		% of pop. in Inner Notts	% of pop. in Outer Notts	% of pop. in Northern
1a*	City +	85.75%	0%	0%
	County	0%	100%	29.31%
1b	City +	70.41%	0%	0%
	County	15.33%	100%	29.31%
1e	City +	70.89%	0%	0%
	County	14.85%	100%	29.31%
Bii*	**Con.**	**76.74%**	**0%**	**0%**
	County	**9.01%**	**100%**	**29.31%**

TTWA Analysis		% of pop. in Inner Notts	% of pop. in Mans	% of pop. in W&R	% of pop. in Out of Area
1a*	City +	79.63%	2.76%	0%	0%
	County	6.04%	80.87%	91.21%	17.36%
1b	City +	65.21%	2.76%	0%	0%
	County	20.46%	80.87%	91.21%	17.36%
1e	City +	66.70%	0%	0%	0%
	County	18.98%	83.62%	91.21%	17.36%
Bii*	**Con.**	**71.37%**	**2.18%**	**0%**	**0%**
	County	**14.3%**	**81.45**	**91.21%**	**17.36%**

*Key: **City +**: Nottingham City, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling*
***Con**: The % of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling + City*

Sensible Geographic Area

The surplus of housing over the next 15 years is expected to be beneficial for the City / Conurbation in all options. There is a degree of imbalance between the two regions, however this is comparable with the other options proposed.

What did the papers find?

The assessment found that while both Options 1b and 1e offer viable pathways for housing delivery, Option 1e presents a more coherent geography for strategic planning. Option 1b benefits from urban redevelopment potential and established planning partnerships, but is constrained by extensive Green Belt coverage and fragmented control over strategic growth areas south of the River Trent.

In contrast, Option 1e consolidates Nottingham City, Broxtowe, and Rushcliffe—three authorities already collaborating on the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan—into a single unitary, enabling more streamlined delivery of housing across major growth sites.

Although Gedling's exclusion from Option 1e introduces a limitation, the inclusion of Rushcliffe offsets this by aligning the most significant future housing allocations under one authority, thereby enhancing coordination.

Insight from findings

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) produces an outcome that is the midpoint of options 1b and 1e, where the overall difference is higher for the City than 1b, and lower for the City than 1e. It is therefore comparable to these options, and provides no significant material difference.

If emphasis is placed on delivering the greatest surplus supply to Nottingham City, then 1e should be considered. If emphasis is placed on minimising the imbalance between the two regions, 1b should be prioritised. Option Bii (Composite Proposal) could be considered as a compromise between these two factors.

Quantitative analysis shows that under Option 1b, the City area has a surplus of 5,270 homes over a 15-year period, while the County area faces a shortfall of 3,000 homes. In contrast, Option 1e reveals a deficit in both areas, with the City short by 3,000 homes and the County by 6,525.

Metric		Houses Needed (15 year need)	Known housing supply (15 year supply)	Difference
1a	City +	51,270	57,800	+6,530
	County	34,950	30,690	-4,260
1b	City +	38,430	43,700	+5,270
	County	47,790	44,790	-3,000
1e	City +	41,805	50,600	+8,795
	County	37,890	37,890	-6,525
Bii	**Con.**	**44,763**	**51,477**	**+6,714**
	County	**37,013**	**37,013**	**-4,444**

*Key: **City +**: Nottingham City, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling*
***Con**: The % of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling + City*

5. Comparative analysis

Methodology and Approach

This analysis of other relevant data points seeks to identify which options are likely to result in the establishment of two councils that are broadly balanced.

Developed proxy measurements

Utilising ward level population data published by ONS, a proxy measurement was developed.

Approximated metrics

Utilising the proxy measurements developed through the thematic papers review, the metrics used in the previous phase were approximated for option Bii (Composite Proposal).

Averaged deprivation metrics

In order to assess deprivation of the two areas under option Bii (Composite Proposal), the average was found from the deprivation metrics.

Compared outputs

The outputs from 1a, 1b, and 1e were included for comparison purposes.

Analysed comparators

A RAG rating was developed, comparing these 4 options against all other options considered. Green indicates an option where the future authorities are balanced, whilst red indicates imbalance.

Summary view of comparative analysis for the three options

A RAG rating has been applied to each metric, comparing the four options graded against all options, including those from the previous phase. This means that a metric that is graded red represents the least optimal configuration *of all the options*. For further detail, please refer to the appendix.

		Rural / Urban*	Time to key services	Debt to reserve per capita ratio	Social care spend to council tax (current)	Social care spend to council tax (2032/2033)	Population (2035)	Deprivation	Housing need	Business Growth*	Healthcare provision
1a	Nottingham **City** + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	20.30%	1.9	46.0	0.83	0.84	739,151	23	20.6	See appendix for further details	7,209
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs			14.7	0.96	0.98	525,494	24.1	15.1		8,429
1b	Nottingham **City** + Broxtowe + Gedling	34.40%	3.5	53.5	0.94	0.94	603,185	26.5	19.6	See appendix for further details	7,101
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs			14.0	0.84	0.87	661,460	20.7	17.2		8,281
1e	Nottingham **City** + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	18.30%	1.7	47.4	0.87	0.87	611,518	24.7	20.5	See appendix for further details	6,906
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs			14.7	0.90	0.92	653,127	22.3	16.3		8,556
Bii	Nottingham **Conurbation**	20.90%	2.2	50.0	0.86	0.94	660,520	24.3	20.5	See appendix for further details	6,205
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs			14.6	0.91	0.93	604,125	22.5	15.9		8,385

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) ranks very similar to options 1b and 1e for the majority of the metrics. It performs significantly better than 1b on time to key services, and better on housing need.

**For the Rural/ Urban metric, a higher degree of imbalance is associated with a positive configuration. Business growth uses reliance on one sector as a measurement for identifying the least optimal configuration.*

Most optimal configuration — Least optimal configuration

6. Conclusion

Summary of findings

This analysis shows that while option Bii (Composite Proposal) can achieve the same level of benefits as options 1b and 1e, the complexity of disaggregating third party contracts from existing district footprints is likely to incur additional transition costs. Option Bii (Composite Proposal) could provide greater coherence in service delivery for primarily rural and urban communities, and is similar in terms of the balance of geographic and economic indicators to option 1b & 1e.

Comparative analysis

The comparative analysis indicates that Option Bii (Composite Proposal) performs similarly to Options 1b and 1e across most key metrics, suggesting it is comparable to these other options.

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) demonstrates strong balance in areas such as population projections, debt to reserve per capita, and deprivation.

More detailed work will be required through the development of a detailed financial case and full proposal to demonstrate that this option meets MHCLG's requirements to implement an option with varied district boundaries.

Thematic Papers Review

The review of thematic areas suggests that Option Bii (Composite Proposal) is broadly comparable to Options 1b and 1e on these domains, with several indicators pointing to stronger outcomes from a service delivery perspective.

In areas like Children's Social Care and SEND, Bii (Composite Proposal) presents a more even spread of demand. When analysing the economic and geographic areas, Bii (Composite Proposal) presents no significant material difference to 1b or 1e.

Overall, there is potential for Bii (Composite Proposal) to provide a configuration of local government that provides a viable model for service delivery and a distinctive remit for the respective urban-focused and rural-focused authorities that would be created.

Impact on financial analysis

The financial comparison highlights that whilst all options deliver the same annual benefits of £24.6 million (based on the analysis undertaken at this stage) options 1b & 1e are more financially efficient, with lower transition costs (£28.8 million), a shorter payback period of 1.3 years, and a higher net benefit of £64.7 million over five years.

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) has higher one-off transition costs (£31.6 million) arising from additional anticipated programme and design requirements due to the added complexity of change. There is therefore a longer payback period of 1.7 years and a lower net benefit of £62.0 million after 5 years.

It should also be noted that there may be additional financial complexities for the wider public service delivery system where partners currently organise or deliver services aligned to a district footprint.

Appraisal of options

Additional analysis was completed focussed on MHCLG criteria for unitary local government, comparing option Bii (Composite Proposal) to 1b and 1e. This, and previous analysis, has informed the evaluation of each option against all MHCLG criteria. The analysis indicates that all three options put forward a configuration for local government that are likely, on balance, to address the criteria (with mitigations likely to be required in some instances). The RAG rating indicates relative alignment to the criteria among the options (those highlighted in pink are factors that allow for detailed comparative grading).

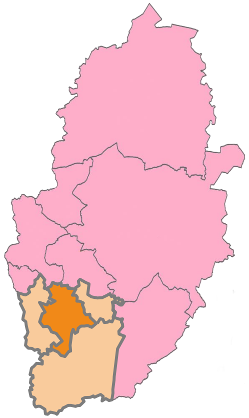
Criteria	Key factors	Option 1b	Option 1e	Option Bii
1 Sensible single tier of local government	*Establishes a single tier of Local Government for the whole of the area concerned* *Sensible economic area: with a tax base which does not create undue inequalities* *Sensible geographic area: which will help increase housing supply and meet local needs*	Medium	High	High
2 'Right-sized' local government	*A population of 500,000 or more (unless specific scenarios make this unreasonable)* *Supports efficiencies and value for money for council taxpayers* *Improves capacity and supports the council to withstand financial shocks* *Manageable transition costs*	High	High	Medium
3 High quality, sustainable services	*Improves local government & service delivery, avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation* *Opportunity for public service reform including where this will lead to improved value for money* *Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk to negative impact on crucial services*	High	Medium	High
4 Meets local needs	*Meets local needs and is informed by local views* *Improves / mitigates risk to issues of local identity, cultural and historic importance* *Addresses local concerns*	High	Medium	Medium
5 Supports devolution arrangements	*Helps to support devolution arrangements / unlock devolution* *Sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority*	High	High	High
6 Local engagement and empowerment	*Enables stronger community engagement* *Delivers genuine opportunities for neighbourhood empowerment*	Medium	Medium	Medium

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of Option Bii (Composite Proposal)

Set out below is further rationale to underpin the comparative RAG rating against the MHCLG criteria for option Bii (Composite Proposal). For those areas which carry a "medium" amber rating, specific areas of difference compared with option 1b and 1e are highlighted, but which could be contextualised or mitigated through the development of a narrative and evidence base for a full proposal to government.

Bii

o Unitary Authorities: Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Conurbation



Alignment to MHCLG criteria

H M L

Criteria	Areas of strength and suggested further development
Criteria 1	• **Strengths:** strong alignment with sensible geography and economic area criteria.
Criteria 2	• **Strengths:** retains balanced projected population levels (with c.51k higher projected population in the conurbation authority). • **Areas for development:** There are higher transition costs than under 1(b) or 1(e) due to the proposed division of existing district boundaries through reorganisation. Specifically, additional programme and engagement capacity, and external design and implementation support are likely to be required to manage the transition and realise the financial benefits.
Criteria 3	• **Strengths:** Provides a balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND. Creates two distinct areas enabling tailored and specialised service delivery models in line with local population needs and contexts.
Criteria 4	• **Strengths:** Combines portions of authorities that are the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings. • **Areas for development:** Approach to managing any complexities arising from disaggregating services currently delivered at a district footprint, and allaying any local concerns that may arise as a result of different areas within Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe aligning to different unitary authorities.
Criteria 5	• **Strengths:** Combined authority already exists within the Nottingham City conurbation and meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (661k for Nottingham Conurbation and 604k for Nottinghamshire by 2035).
Criteria 6	• **Strengths:** Similar clustering of Mosaic segments and some overlap with Hospital Trusts and Nottingham City Council boundaries; delineation between urban and rural areas may offer new opportunities for neighbourhood empowerment. • **Areas for development:** New local fora and channels may be required to effectively engage communities.

Definition of RAG ratings

High

A green rating shows a high congruence with MHCLG criteria. It is expected that this would be an advantageous element to set out in a full proposal.

Medium

An amber rating shows good degree of alignment with MHCLG criteria, but where additional rationale, detail, mitigation, or explanation may be beneficial when developing a full proposal.

Low

A red rating shows a low congruence with MHCLG criteria. It is expected that this will not meet the criteria required for MHCLG to approve this option.

Next steps

The below timetable articulates the key deadlines relating to local government reorganisation within the region, and what should happen in order to progress option Bii forwards.

Timeline

1. **12th September 2025 - Comparative options appraisal**
   The draft report, covering a high level options appraisal of option Bii (Composite Proposal), is issued.

2. **28th November 2025 - Submission to MHCLG**
   A proposal, along with a full business case, is due to be submitted to MHCLG by the 28th November.

3. **Early 2026 - Feedback from MHCLG**
   Feedback is provided by MHCLG, ensuring final proposals include clear rationale, financial assessments, and evidence of public engagement.

4. **April 2027 - Shadow Authority established**
   Shadow authorities will be formed and take responsibility of the future Council over the year ahead, before vesting day.

5. **April 2028 - Vesting Day**
   New unitary authorities will formally take control over all responsibilities.

Areas for development

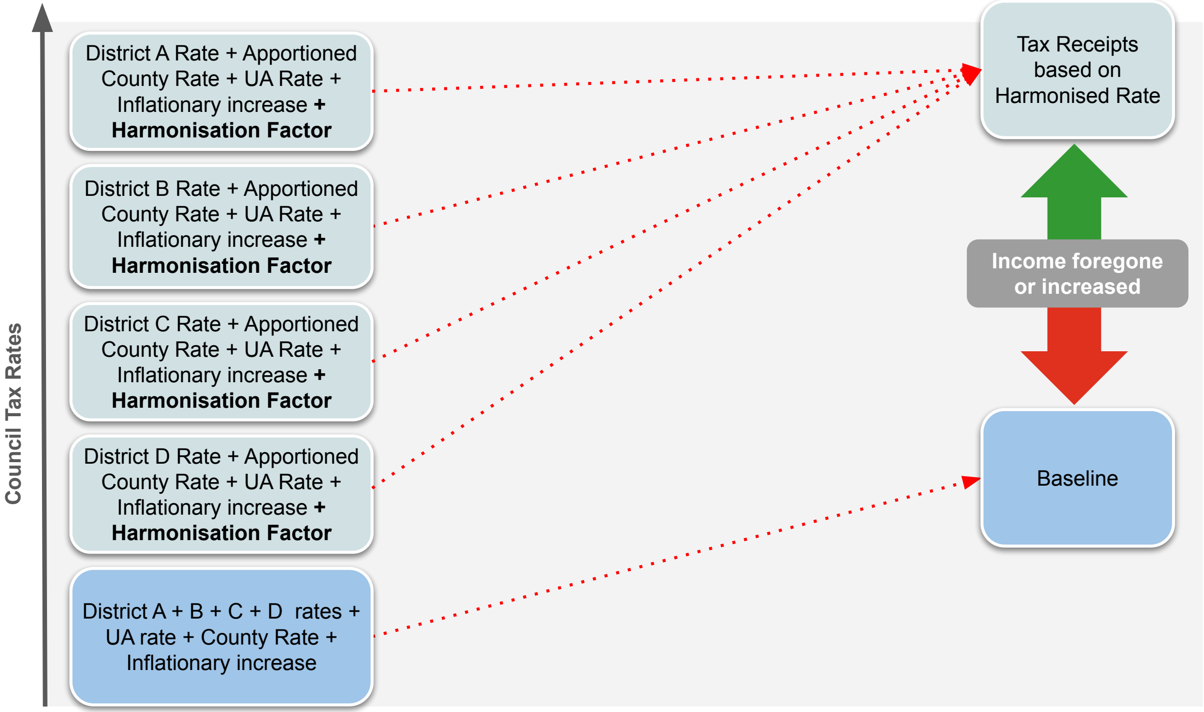
- An **internal decision** needs to be reached about the viability of option Bii (Composite Proposal), and whether it should be progressed forwards to develop a full business case and proposal for submission to MHCLG.
- **External stakeholders** should be engaged, to inform them of the plan and proposal. Feedback gathered can be used in the drafting of the proposal.
- A **detailed financial analysis** of option Bii (Composite Proposal) will be needed, in order to effectively compare it as an option to 1b and 1e. These two options are currently being developed through detailed financial modelling.
- Once the modelling has been completed, a **business case and proposal** needs to be drafted, reviewed and approved, for submission to MHCLG by 28th November.

7a. Appendix

Social Care Spend to Council Tax

Council tax harmonisation approach (1/2)

Council Tax harmonisation refers to the process of aligning the existing tax bands from different districts into a unified set of bands for a new authority. This model has calculated by adjusting them towards a calculated mean.



Harmonising to the highest current rate is likely to lead to larger increases for citizens paying less tax currently, but is also likely to forego less income - and potentially to generate additional income in some areas.

Harmonising to the mean will result in changes to all rates (as the mean is unlikely to exactly equal one of the existing rates). The overall impact will vary depending on the current tax structure.

Harmonising to the lowest current rate is likely to forego the greatest income, but has the lowest impact on rates in areas with lower taxation. This may be seen as more equitable but is more costly in terms of income

Council tax harmonisation approach (2/2)

Council Tax harmonisation refers to the process of aligning the existing tax bands from different districts into a unified set of bands for a new authority. This model has calculated by adjusting them towards a calculated mean.

Project Future Tax Base

Using ONS population projections, the tax base of each District and Nottingham City is adjusted to provide a cumulative increase in households for the coming years. At this point, the timescale for harmonisation (how many years the rates will take to become a single figure) was chosen as 7 years, as well as harmonising to the mean rate.

Project Future Tax Rates

The county tax rate is then apportioned across the Districts according to population to create a single rate for each. District, unitary and county rates are assumed to increase at their annual maximum each year to meet expected financial needs.

Calculate Tax Receipt

The projected rates are multiplied by the increasing tax base, and are gradually incremented to approach harmonisation with either the lowest, highest or median rate among the group as selected. This calculates an annual tax receipt based on the rates as they harmonise.

Calculate Income Foregone

The receipts are compared with a baseline projected by the original rates, incremented per year and multiplied by the projected tax base. The difference between this baseline and the harmonised receipts represents the income foregone or gained via the harmonisation process.

Social care spend to council tax receipts

Combining the projected council tax receipts to the combined social care spend in 2032/33 produces the following ratio.

Metric		Combined social care spend (2032/33)	Council tax receipts (2032/33)	Combined social care spend to council tax (2032/33)
1a	City +	£396,599,429	£473,236,997	0.84
	County	£349,768,049	£356,250,576	0.98
1b	City +	£337,462,666	£359,340,174	0.94
	County	£408,904,812	£470,435,575	0.87
1e	City +	£331,744,281	£380,332,467	0.87
	County	£414,623,197	£449,735,749	0.92
Bii	**Con.**	£358,268,326	£380,705,437	**0.94**
	County	£388,099,152	£415,699,141	**0.93**

Analysis

Utilising this approach to council tax harmonisation yields a lower combined sum of council tax receipts under Bii (Composite Proposal) (~£796m), when compared with other options (£829m - £830m). This is due to the fact that Nottingham City has a significantly larger population than the surrounding areas, and also has the highest council tax rate. As such, by combining to the average of the four council tax rates across Nottingham CIty, Broxtowe, Gedling, and Rushcliffe, the conurbation foregoes receipts.

The sum of the combined social care spend does not change between any of the options, although is apportioned differently between the options.

For the conurbation, this means that whilst they receive as much in council tax as under 1e, their spend on social care is significantly higher (~£27m). Due to the foregone council tax receipts, the final ratios are marginally different to the pattern across the other 3 options.

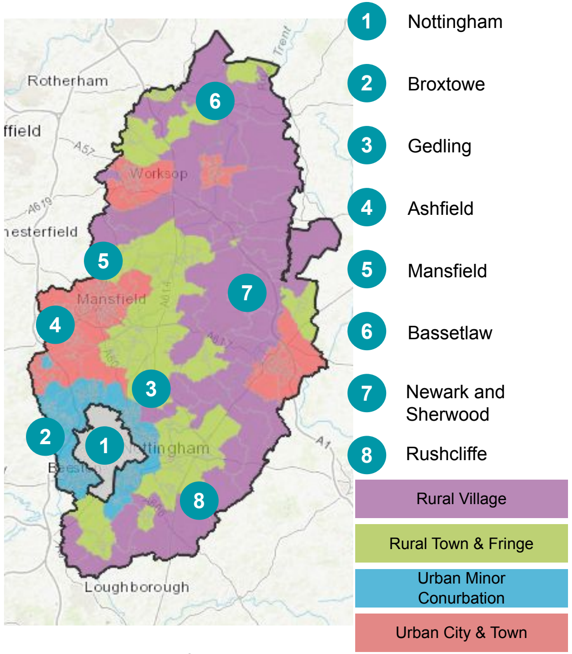
There are other methodologies and approaches to council tax harmonisation, each with advantages and limitations. Utilising a different methodology will impact this ratio and can be explored as part of a detailed financial case. This approach and methodology was used for the appraisal of options 1a, 1b, and 1e, and therefore has been used here in order to compare outputs.

7b. Appendix

Comparative Analysis

Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (current)

The table below sets out the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography and how this is reflected when combined in the different LGR options that are under consideration.



Average proportion of rural population
[*Department for Rural Affairs - Rural Urban Classification Map - Nottingham Observatory*]

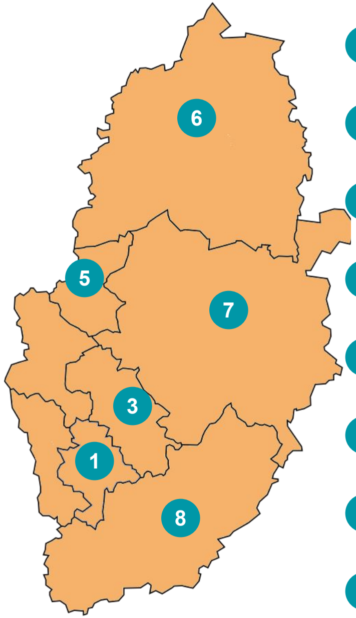
Option		Rural %	Urban %	Difference between %'s
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	13.4%	86.6%	20.30%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	33.7%	66.3%	
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	3.9%	96.1%	34.40%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	38.3%	61.7%	
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	12.4%	87.6%	18.30%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	30.7%	69.3%	
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	11.9%	88.1%	20.90%
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	32.8%	67.2%	

For the Rural-Urban analysis, an option with a greater difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Key: Options that are most alike in rural / urban — Options that are least alike in rural / urban

Analysis: Time to key services analysis

This table highlights which of the potential options are the most equitable in time taken to travel to key services e.g. employment centres, primary schools, secondary schools, further education, GPs, hospitals, food retail and town centres.



1 Nottingham
2 Broxtowe
3 Gedling
4 Ashfield
5 Mansfield
6 Bassetlaw
7 Newark and Sherwood
8 Rushcliffe

Option		Time to key services via public transport / walking (min)	Difference between options (mins)
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	15.6	1.9
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	17.5	
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	14.6	3.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	18.1	
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	15.5	1.7
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	17.3	
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	15.4	2.2
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	17.5	

For the time to key service analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Source: *Average time to key services (Public Transport/ Walking) Department of Transport Journey Time Statistics*

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis

Set out below are key components that underpin the debt-to-reserve per capita ratio analysis, as a potential indicator of relative financial health for each option.

Option		# of People (2023)	Total Debt (£000s, 24/25)	Total Reserves - (£000s, 23/24)	Debt per capita (£)	Reserves per capita (£)	Difference between %'s
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	684,865	£857,060	£18,633	£1,251	£27	46.0
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	488,905	£792,540	£45,130	£1,621	£110	14.7
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	£857,060	£16,029	£1,528	£29	53.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	£792,540	£56,611	£1,293	£92	14.0
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	£846,248	£17,867	£1,494	£32	47.4
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	£803,352	£54,773	£1,322	£90	14.7
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	612,557	£835,298	£16,705	£1,364	£27	50.0
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	561,213	£814,302	£47,058	£1,451	£100	14.6

For the debt to reserve per capita analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Sources:
[1] Borrowing and Investment Live Tables. Q2 2024-25:
[2] ONS Estimates of the Population for England and Wales Mid-2023
[3] Revenue outturn summary 2023-2024

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Social Care demand to Council Tax take (current)

The analysis set out below below compares 2024/25 adult's and children's social care actual spend to council tax receipts in 2023/24 to gauge the potential strain on public services.

Option		Total ASC Spend (2024/25)	Total CSC Spend (2024/25)	Total Care Spend (2024/25)	Council Tax Receipts (2023/24)	Care to Council Tax Receipt Ratio
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	£ 195,697,007	£ 155,020,700	£ 350,717,708	£421,660,000	0.83
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 175,347,993	£ 133,310,300	£ 308,658,292	£322,841,000	0.96
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	£164,626,206	£134,262,020	£298,888,226	£317,184,000	0.94
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£206,418,792	£154,068,977	£360,487,769	£427,317,000	0.84
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	£160,376,612	£132,493,533	£292,870,145	£335,799,000	0.87
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£210,668,386	£155,837,464	£366,505,850	£408,702,000	0.9
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	174,771,824	£ 141,913,763	£ 316,685,587	367,214,446	0.86
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	196,273,176	£ 146,417,237	£ 342,690,413	£377,286,554	0.91

For the social care demand to council take tax analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Sources:
[1] Nottingham City Council Budget Monitoring Report FY24/25;
[2] Nottinghamshire County Council revenue budget statement FY24/25
[3] Council Tax

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Social Care demand to Council Tax take (projected)

The analysis set out below below compares projected adult's and children's social care actual spend to projected council tax receipts to gauge the potential strain on public services.

Option		Total ASC Spend (2032/33)	Total CSC Spend (2032/33)	Total Care Spend (2032/33)	Council Tax Receipts (2032/33)	Care to Council Tax Receipt Ratio
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	211,335,342	£185,264,087	£396,599,429	£473,236,997	0.84
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	190,449,901	£159,318,148	£349,768,049	£356,250,576	0.98
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	£177,007,122	£160,455,544	£337,462,666	£359,340,174	0.94
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£224,778,121	£184,126,692	£408,904,812	£470,435,575	0.87
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	£173,402,244	£158,342,037	£331,744,281	£380,332,467	0.87
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£228,382,999	£186,240,198	£414,623,197	£449,735,749	0.92
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	£188,668,243	£169,600,084	£358,268,326	380,705,436.50	0.94
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	£ 213,117,000	£174,982,152	£388,099,152	415,699,140.70	0.93

For the social care demand to council take tax analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred. It should be noted that this RAG rating is based on degree of difference between the two regions, and that ideally social care spend to council tax receipts should be a lower ratio.

Sources:
[1] 2024 England Taxbase - Taxbase data
[2] Tax Rate - Band D Council Tax Figures
[3] Nottingham City Council Budget Monitoring Report FY24/25;
[4] Nottinghamshire County Council revenue budget statement FY24/2

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Population

The table below compares current and forecasted population estimates for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire across the different options under consideration.

Option		Population (2023)	Population (2035)
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	684,865	739,151
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	488,905	525,494
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	603,185
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	661,460
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	611,518
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	653,127
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	612,557	660,520
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	561,213	604,125

For the population analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Sources:
[1] ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales Mid-2023

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Deprivation

This table summarises the key findings from analysis of the indices of deprivation, highlighting the areas of greatest need.

Option		Average deprivation score
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	23
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	24.1
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	26.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	20.7
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	24.7
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	22.3
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	24.3
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	22.5

For the deprivation analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Sources:
[1] English indices of deprivation 2019

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Housing Need

This table summarises the findings from the housing need analysis, identifying which option will see a greatest difference in the number of homes per 1000 of the population.

Option		Population (current)	Forecast new homes (2022-2027)	Forecast new homes needed per 1000 people (2022-2027)
1a	Nottingham City Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	684,865	14,110	20.6
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	488,905	7,400	15.1
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	11,000	19.6
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	10,510	17.2
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	11,625	20.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	9,885	16.3
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	612,557	12,568	20.5
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	561,213	8,942	15.9

For the housing need analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

**Nottingham City figures reflect base need values. It excludes a 35% uplift.*

Sources:
[1] Assessment of Housing Need and Capacity in Nottingham City, Dec 2022
[2] Nottinghamshire County Council: Draft Housing Strategy 2023-2028

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Business Growth

The analysis sets out which would be the three largest areas of potential growth across each of the options based upon Gross Value Added (GVA) figures, coupled with the UK GDP growth seen over the last five years. This is intended to give an indication of which options might be able to grow economies and where that might be more challenging.There are new opportunities - such as the freeport - which are not yet captured in this data.

Option		Largest Sector		2nd largest		3rd largest	
		Sector	%	Sector	%	Sector	%
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.9%	Real Estate	10.8%	Education	10.8%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	16.4%	Education	12.0%	Healthcare & Social Work	11.8%
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.2%	Education	11.5%	Healthcare & Social Work	10.8%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	14.5%	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.7%	Real Estate	11.2%
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.6%	Education	11.2%	Professional services	10.1%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	16.3%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.5%	Real Estate	11.6%
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.9%	Education	11.2%	Real Estate	10.5%
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	Manufacturing	16.2%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.0%	Healthcare & Social Work	11.0%

For the business growth analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the largest two sectors is assumed to be preferred. This will minimise a region's vulnerability risk.

Sector	UK GDP growth rates over last 2020-24 (5 years)
Healthcare & Social Work	34.5%
Education	34.1%
Professional services	26.3%
Wholesale & Retail trade	12.8%
Real Estate	3.3%
Manufacturing	-3.6%

While historical GDP growth rates may provide indications of future sectoral resilience, actual future economic performance may diverge due to various factors. This includes potential local growth drivers, such as the development of the East Midlands Freeport, Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) programme and interventions from the strategic authority (EMCCA), could influence sectoral vulnerability and economic prospects.

Options with least sector reliance

Analysis: Healthcare Provision

Set out below is a summary of the population numbers served per GP surgery in each of the options under consideration.

Option		Population (2023)	Number of GP surgeries (February 2025)	Number of people served per GP surgery
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	684,865	95	7,209
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	488,905	58	8,429
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	79	7,101
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	74	8,281
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	82	6,906
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	71	8,556
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	612,557	86	7,117
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	561,213	67	8,385

For the healthcare provision analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Sources:
[1] ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales Mid-2023
[2] ONS Number of GP surgeries in local areas, England and Wales
[3] ONS Number of GPs per local areas, England and Wales

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Appendix D – how does our neighbourhood public services offer supports delivery of national reform?

Nationally, the Government is building a strategy that strengthens public service delivery and improves outcomes for residents through public service reform which emphasises neighbourhood and locality working. Across a number of key government departments, reform programmes of change are bringing the bottom up, neighbourhood and place-based approaches to the core. These reforms collectively signal a shift toward decentralisation, embedding neighbourhood and locality models across health, housing, economic development, and governance.

Criteria 3b of the statutory invitation encourages local authorities to identify "Opportunities to deliver public service reform [should be identified], including where they will lead to better value for money". Our proposition offers real opportunities to anchor public service reform in collaborative neighbourhood governance and an integrated neighbourhood public service delivery structure. This enables us to maximise the benefits of local government reorganisation for the wider public service partnership in the local area. It facilitates partners to work together to agree and deliver on shared priority outcomes, ensures more needs-led and tailored allocation of resource at a local level, mobilises community assets to support proactive prevention and the building blocks of health and to co-design services that improve outcomes, reduce health inequalities, deliver value for money to the taxpayer and more sustainable public services for the future.

This appendix seeks to outline how our proposition supports the delivery of the ambitions outlined in the NHS 10 Year Plan, particularly the strategic shifts from sickness to prevention and hospital to community. Neighbourhood health is at the heart of delivering these shifts, and working to implement this alongside the requirements of local government reorganisation offers significant opportunities to create more consistent neighbourhood structures and ways of working together that can better meet the needs of local people and communities.

Beyond 2028

Our proposal would seek to integrate neighbourhood health plans (reflecting proposed NPSC geographies, serving a population of 30,000-50,000) with a wider public services offer, recognising the role of both EMCCA and the local authority in delivering the building blocks of health and a proactive, community-based prevention offer. These plans would be informed by integrated/ joint strategic needs assessments, population data and neighbourhood data profiles, developed with communities to ensure that plans meet local needs and are shaped by local people. Integrated plans would be rooted in local democratic accountability, with the co-produced plan being endorsed by the Neighbourhood Public Service Committee and informing local allocation of delegated budgets and influencing local service delivery.

We would explore opportunities to build on existing structures to strengthen collaboration, bringing together partners who are able to make decisions about the local allocation of partnership resources and models of local service delivery. This will enable a more locally responsive system, geared to move from insight and planning to action more quickly, shifting the way we deliver integrated neighbourhood public services together as a partnership in real-time.

Where further decision-making is required to enable action, we will utilise the Council's democratic structures or route insights from neighbourhood planning to inform policy or commissioning decisions for pan/regional partners. This will enable partners, like the ICB, to shape their strategic commissioning intentions over time to ensure greater population accountability, a strengthened focus on prevention, the building blocks of health and integration of service delivery.

We provide a high-level road map for collaborative implementation, with a commitment to working alongside local system partners and Health and Wellbeing boards to maximise the opportunities for reform. With Nottingham City Council currently working as a pathfinder area for the National Neighbourhood Health Implementation Programme (NNHIP) we are well placed as a partnership to learn from this programme and work iteratively together to deliver a new, more integrated neighbourhood public service offer.

Indicative High Level Implementation Plan (NB: this should be read alongside the wider implementation plan provided).				
	Phase 2 – Planning	**Phase 3 – Early Transition**	**Phase 4 – Launch**	**Phase 5 - Transformation**
Neighbourhood Governance	Mapping of existing neighbourhood governance and resident engagement forums to build on strengths and community assets.	Early engagement with communities and partners to co-design terms of reference and delegation.	Establish Neighbourhood Public Service Committees (NPSCs) under shadow authorities, building a network of representative community forums to support.	Decisions are made closer to neighbourhoods, with clear routes in place for local people to inform local decision-making.
Partnership Collaboration	Agree common definitions for spatial geographies	Integrated partnership insights inform a shared overall vision and outcomes framework for integrated neighbourhood public services.	Agree structures, roles and responsibilities for place/locality collaborative partnerships (i.e. links with Health & Wellbeing Boards.)	Partnership collaboration in place, closer to neighbourhoods, so that strategy and decision-making is informed by neighbourhood planning and governance.
Neighbourhood Planning	Strengthen existing information sharing arrangements to allow us to pool relevant data/insights.	Develop integrated needs assessment and neighbourhood insight profiles.	Share insights with NPSCs and community forums to shape plans.	Neighbourhood plans are aggregated to inform partnership strategy and are used to drive tailored neighbourhood service delivery models.
Neighbourhood Public Service Delivery	Early engagement with partners to identify potential scope of multi-disciplinary integrated neighbourhood teams.	Workforce in scope for integration/alignment are engaged to begin service design.	Service design is shared with community groups/forums to support co-design and co-production.	Safe transition on Day One, with test/learn framework to enable development of tailored local delivery models

Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Councils

Financial Case Option 1b and 1e

November 2025

Contents

1. Overview of approach

Purpose of the Financial Analysis

This document provides an overview position for each unitary option detailing the estimates for transition costs as well as the benefits from aggregation and implementation. It sets out the estimated financial balance of each organisation across income and expenditure and then asset and liabilities.

The output covers:

- A “day 1” budget forecast derived from the above and from income and expenditure projections on the basis of our agreed assumptions and inputs
- A “day 1” financial balance factoring in apportionments of assets, associated liabilities and borrowing commitments according to geography and function
- An updated view of the estimated cost and benefit of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and potential subsequent transformation for each proposed configuration of unitary authorities

Note: this is an estimated financial position for the new unitary authorities developed using current financial data and assumptions. It does not, therefore, take into account decisions that might be taken during the transition phase that might have an impact on costs, realisation of benefits, or wider elements that could impact the Day 1 position e.g the outcome of the Fair Funding Review, changes in the local government finance settlement, inflation, or political developments at both local and national levels.

Components of the Financial Analysis

The analysis undertaken and assumptions applied provides an estimated forecast of "Year 1" budgets and financial balance for the new Unitary Authorities (UAs) options, the projected impact of LGR and Transformation. Separately, an analysis of potential scenarios for council tax harmonisation is provided to demonstrate the impact of this fiscal lever for the new authorities.

Forecast Budgets for new Unitary Authorities

Existing MTFS projections

- **Income including Council Tax**
  - Exceptional Financial Support
  - MTFS Business Rates, Council Tax, Grants
  - Use of earmarked and General Fund Reserves
- **Expenditure**
  - Efficiency Savings
  - Additional demand pressures overspend
  - Additional costs from staffing pay alignment

Impact of LGR (benefits and costs)

- **Recurring LGR aggregation benefits**
  - FTE consolidation (including senior leadership)
  - Third party and property spend reduction
  - Elected member and election cost reduction
- **One off transition costs**
  - Redundancies and salary alignment; IT migrations; contingency
  - Engagement, design, transition and programme support
  - Organisation closedown and establishment

Transformation
- Staffing and operating model transformation benefits
- Third Party Spend reduction
- Transformation costs

Existing transformation (factored into MTFS) → Planned transformation (but not factored into current MTFS) → **Transformation activity *following* reorganisation**

Financial Balance for new Unitary Authorities

- **Assets (HRA/Non-HRA)**
  - Long Term Assets
- **Liabilities**
  - Long Term Liabilities
  - Borrowing Interest

Together, these outputs form the basis of the initial financial position (eg. FY 2028/29) for the new unitary authorities following their establishment.

Council Tax Harmonisation

Alongside the outputs above, analysis has been undertaken to project the impact of different scenarios for Council Tax Harmonisation that the new authorities would be responsible for agreeing and implementing.

Weighted average method

High, low and average harmonisation scenarios

Timeline to the financial analysis

Set out below is the methodology and logic for assumptions applied. The additional complexity involved in creating multiple unitary authorities has been taken into account in the form of increased transition costs and reductions in economies of scale. To note, transformation costs and benefits are applied after reorganisation based on an assumed level of ambition and implementation of further change to realise the full benefit.

Reorganisation Benefits and Costs

Reorganisation Benefits

Recurring Aggregation Benefits: Savings achieved through consolidation e.g. management, systems and support functions. These are ongoing efficiencies generated through removing duplication and streamlining processes.

These benefits are phased over the initial years following vesting (30% in year 1; 50% in year 2), before being 100% realised in year 3 (2030/31).

Reorganisation Costs

One-off Transition Costs: Upfront investment needed to create new authorities.

These costs are incurred incrementally in the four years following vesting (30% in year 1; 30% in year 2; 30% in year 3, 10% in year 4). The cumulative percentage of costs add to 100%.

Transformation

Post-Vesting Day

Transformation Benefits

Efficiency and productivity improvements realised once new authorities are established and operating effectively.

Reflect long-term service redesign, innovation, and better outcomes for residents.

These benefits begin to realise in Year 1 (28/29) following vesting (25% in year 1; 50% in year 2), before being 100% realised in year 3 (2030/31).

Transformation Costs

Investment required to modernise and redesign services (e.g. digitalisation, workforce reform, asset rationalisation).

These are incurred after reorganisation and are distinct from transition costs. These are short-term costs intended to unlock longer-term service and financial improvements.

Different scenarios for the phasing of costs of transformation have been developed to inform the cost-benefit analysis.

2. Estimated Day 1 Position

Estimated Year 1 income and net expenditure position is set out on this page for Option 1B.

MTFS figures from the most recent published versions as of 31 March 2025 have been used to estimate forward-looking income and net expenditure for the purposes of developing the Year 1 position. This baseline position was agreed with S151 Officers for all Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities in September.

The Year 1 position is not intended to predict the outcome of national funding reforms or new grant schemes. A significant number of elements could impact the Year 1 position, including the Fair Funding Review, future settlements from government, inflation, political change nationally and locally. The government is expected to provide more detail on the Fair Funding Review outcome in Autumn 2025.

Option 1B | Estimated Year 1 Position

Modelling indicates that the proposed new councils will begin operations in the following financial position.

- **Opening deficits:** The combined opening position across the new UAs shows significant core funding pressures. All will start with an operating deficit, which is not unexpected as local government is operating in a challenging financial context.
- **Efficiency requirements:** To achieve a balanced budget, savings are required across multiple councils, with many needing recurring efficiency gains over the next 5 years. These are outlined in the notes below.
- **Strategic trade-offs:** Councils will face early policy choices: draw further on reserves, amend Council Tax, or accelerate service transformation. Longer-term gains from LGR aggregation and longer-term transformation integration are potential offsets.

	Option 1b	
	North *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe*	**South** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling*
28/29 Core Funding	£648,520,241	£594,372,174
28/29 Net Cost Operating Expenditure	£672,117,041	£653,748,917
28/29 "Year 1" Budget Gap	**£23,596,800**	**£59,376,743**
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc. demand pressures	**£80,016,112**	**£178,755,555**
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc. demand pressures net of savings, Exceptional Financial Support, Reserves from MTFS	**£43,483,641**	**£70,906,860**

Authority	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark & Sherwood	Rushcliffe	Nottingham City	Nottinghamshire County
Year Used	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29
Source	Annual Budget And Council Tax 2025/26 And Medium Term Financial Strategy Update Pg 15	Medium Term Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2029-30 Pg 18	Medium Term Financial Strategy	General Fund Revenue Budget 2025/26 Pg 20	Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 To 2027/28 Pg 17	Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2025/26 Pg2	Budget Setting Report And Associated Financial Strategie Pg 43	Medium Term Financial Strategy	Budget 2025/26 – Proposals For Submission To Full Council Pg 22
MTFS Note	Efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget.General and Embarked reserves have been used to achieve a net 0 for 2025/26	The Budget highlights the need for the implementation of savings and efficiencies in order to balance the budget. Both general and other reserves are required	The MTFS includes a Business Strategy that sets out initiatives to reduce costs and generate additional income.General fund will be used to balance the budget	Most efficiencies have been built in the budget. Additional efficiencies are yet to be identified.General fund will be used	The Council has a programme of savings that it needs to deliver in order to balance its budget.	Efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget.General and Embarked reserves have been used to achieve a net 0	The budget includes Transformation and Efficiency Plan savings of £1.7m over the 5-year period helping to reduce the deficit to more manageable levels	Successful delivery of transformational change and efficiency savings will be fundamental to the elimination of deficit	The progress of all savings and efficiencies will be monitored as part of the budget monitoring processes.This budget report is proposing to utilise £46.5m of reserves

As a result of using the consistent baseline of published revenue budgets and MTFS as of 31 March 2025, the projected income and expenditure position does not forecast the impact of updated in-year outturn figures or revised MTFPs prepared as part of the 2026/27 budget-setting process. These may indicate an improved financial position - particularly in the South's net income and expenditure positions and thereby reduce pressure on general fund reserve balances.

An estimated Year 1 Assets and Liabilities position is set out on this page for Option 1B.

The Year 1 Balance Sheet analysis incorporates data which includes:

- Long Term Assets on the current Statement of Accounts
- Long Term Liabilities on the current Statement of Accounts
- Capital Financing Requirements from 25/26 to 28/29
- Capital Programme Budget to from 25/26 to 28/29

Option 1B | Balance Sheet

Modelling indicates that the proposed new councils will begin operations in the following financial position.

- **Assets:** Set out below is an evidence-based estimate of what each new authority would be accountable for on Year 1, drawn from existing Statement of Account asset values, taking in planned and additional disposals of surplus assets into account. The apportionment of assets assumes that asset value follows population across the proposed new unitaries.
- **Liabilities:** Also below is the long term financial obligations that would transfer into any new unitary councils, which are allocated following the same distribution profile as assets. In reality, the apportionment of debt will be worked through in detail as part of the implementation of any new authority.

	Option 1b	
	North *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, and Rushcliffe*	**South** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling*
Assets		
Long Term Assets (28/29)	£4,307,432,202	£4,701,904,337

Liabilities		
Long Term Liabilities (28/29)	£1,126,998,351	£1,228,619,592

Net Assets		
Net Long Term Assets (28/29)	£3,180,433,851	£3,473,284,745

Authority	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark & Sherwood	Rushcliffe	Nottingham city UA	Nottinghamshire County
Sources (Asset)	*Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 9*	*Draft Statement of Accounts 2024/2025 Financial Year Pg 30*	*Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 33*	*Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 42*	*Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 pg 55*	*Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 pg 32*	*Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 53*	*Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 20*	*Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025s Pg 39*

The use of Draft Statement of Accounts for 2024-25 was agreed as a baseline position by Section 151 officers for all authorities. As such, this analysis does not factor in any in-year changes to the asset and liability position for individual authorities (e.g. additional repayment of long-term debt or asset disposal), which could affect the net asset position for the new authorities.

Estimated Year 1 income and net expenditure position is set out on this page for Option 1E.

MTFS figures from the most recent published versions as of 31 March 2025 have been used to estimate forward-looking income and net expenditure for the purposes of developing the Year 1 position. This baseline position was agreed with S151 Officers for all Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities in September.

The Year 1 position is not intended to predict the outcome of national funding reforms or new grant schemes. A significant number of elements could impact the Year 1 position, including the Fair Funding Review, future settlements from government, inflation, political change nationally and locally. The government is expected to provide more detail on the Fair Funding Review outcome in Autumn 2025.

Option 1E | Estimated Year 1 Position

Modelling indicates that the proposed new councils will begin operations in the following financial position.

- **Opening deficits:** The combined opening position across the new UAs shows significant core funding pressures. All will start with an operating deficit, which is not unexpected as local government is operating in a challenging financial context.
- **Efficiency requirements:** To achieve a balanced budget, savings are required across multiple councils, with many needing recurring efficiency gains over the next 5 years. These are outlined in the notes below.
- **Strategic trade-offs:** Councils will face early policy choices: draw further on reserves, amend Council Tax, or accelerate service transformation. Longer-term gains from LGR aggregation and longer-term transformation integration are potential offsets.

	Option 1e	
	North *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling*	**South** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe*
28/29 Core Funding	£638,098,497	£604,793,918
28/29 Net Cost Operating Expenditure	£660,939,524	£664,926,434
28/29 "Year 1" Budget Gap	**£22,841,027**	**£60,132,516**
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc. demand pressures	**£84,269,495**	**£174,502,172**
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc. demand pressures net of savings, Exceptional Financial Support, Reserves from MTFS	**£42,231,311**	**£72,159,190**

Authority	**Ashfield**	**Bassetlaw**	**Broxtowe**	**Gedling**	**Mansfield**	**Newark & Sherwood**	**Rushcliffe**	**Nottingham City**	**Nottinghamshire County**
Year Used	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29
Source	Annual Budget And Council Tax 2025/26 And Medium Term Financial Strategy Update Pg 15	Medium Term Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2029-30 Pg 18	Medium Term Financial Strategy	General Fund Revenue Budget 2025/26 Pg 20	Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 To 2027/28 Pg 17	Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2025/26 Pg2	Budget Setting Report And Associated Financial Strategie Pg 43	Medium Term Financial Strategy	Budget 2025/26 – Proposals For Submission To Full Council Pg 22
MTFS Note	Efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget.General and Embarked reserves have been used to achieve a net 0 for 2025/26	The Budget highlights the need for the implementation of savings and efficiencies in order to balance the budget. Both general and other reserves are required	The MTFS includes a Business Strategy that sets out initiatives to reduce costs and generate additional income.General fund will be used to balance the budget	Most efficiencies have been built in the budget. Additional efficiencies are yet to be identified.General fund will be used	The Council has a programme of savings that it needs to deliver in order to balance its budget.	Efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget.General and Embarked reserves have been used to achieve a net 0	The budget includes Transformation and Efficiency Plan savings of £1.7m over the 5-year period helping to reduce the deficit to more manageable levels	Successful delivery of transformational change and efficiency savings will be fundamental to the elimination of deficit	The progress of all savings and efficiencies will be monitored as part of the budget monitoring processes.This budget report is proposing to utilise £46.5m of reserves

As a result of using the consistent baseline of published revenue budgets and MTFS as of 31 March 2025, the projected income and expenditure position does not forecast the impact of updated in-year outturn figures or revised MTFPs prepared as part of the 2026/27 budget-setting process. These may indicate an improved financial position - particularly in the South's net income and expenditure positions and thereby reduce pressure on general fund reserve balances.

An estimated Year 1 Assets and Liabilities position is set out on this page for Option 1E.

The Year 1 Balance Sheet analysis incorporates data which includes:

- Long Term Assets on the current Statement of Accounts
- Long Term Liabilities on the current Statement of Accounts
- Capital Financing Requirements from 25/26 to 28/29
- Capital Programme Budget to from 25/26 to 28/29

Option 1E | Balance Sheet

Modelling indicates that the proposed new councils will begin operations in the following financial position.

- **Assets:** Set out below is an evidence-based estimate of what each new authority would be accountable for on Year 1, drawn from existing Statement of Account asset values, taking in planned and additional disposals of surplus assets into account. The apportionment of assets assumes that asset value follows population across the proposed new unitaries.
- **Liabilities:** Also below is the long term financial obligations that would transfer into any new unitary councils, which are allocated following the same distribution profile as assets. In reality, the apportionment of debt will be worked through in detail as part of the implementation of any new authority.

	Option 1e	
	North *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, and Gedling*	**South** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe*
Assets		
Long Term Assets (28/29)	£4,218,402,048	£4,790,934,491
Liabilities		
Long Term Liabilities (28/29)	£1,082,073,042	£1,273,544,901
Net Assets		
Net Long Term Assets (28/29)	£3,136,329,005	£3,517,389,591

Authority	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark & Sherwood	Rushcliffe	Nottingham city UA	Nottinghamshire County
Sources (Asset)	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 9	Draft Statement of Accounts 2024/2025 Financial Year Pg 30	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 33	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 42	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 pg 55	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 pg 32	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 53	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 20	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025s Pg 39

The use of Draft Statement of Accounts for 2024-25 was agreed as a baseline position by Section 151 officers for all authorities. As such, this analysis does not factor in any in-year changes to the asset and liability position for individual authorities (e.g. additional repayment of long-term debt or asset disposal), which could affect the net asset position for the new authorities.

Breakdown of MTFS Income & Expenditure

The cumulative deficit shown in the summary analysis reflects the year-on-year differences in income and expenditure shown in each respective council published MTFS (as of 31 March 2025) from 25/26 to 28/29. As a result, the projected income and expenditure position does not forecast the impact of updated in-year outturn figures or revised MTFPs prepared as part of the 2026/27 budget-setting process.

Council	Income - 2025/2026	Expenditure - 2025/2026	Net Difference	Income - 2026/2027	Expenditure - 2026/2027	Net Difference	Income - 2027/2028	Expenditure - 2027/2028	Net Difference	Income - 2028/2029	Expenditure - 2028/2029	Net Difference	Cumulative Difference
Nottinghamshire County	£668,400,000	£668,408,000	-£8,000	£701,400,000	£711,500,000	-£10,100,000	£735,400,000	£741,700,000	-£6,300,000	£771,500,000	£776,900,000	-£5,400,000	**-£21,808,000**
Bassetlaw	£24,757,900	£24,757,900	£0	£22,158,700	£22,158,700	£0	£20,589,000	£22,196,000	-£1,607,000	£19,027,600	£22,014,900	-£2,987,300	**-£4,594,300**
Ashfield	£17,764,000	£22,017,000	-£4,253,000	£15,361,000	£23,484,000	-£8,123,000	£14,826,000	£24,668,000	-£9,842,000	£14,899,000	£24,837,000	-£9,938,000	**-£32,156,000**
Broxtowe	£14,182,000	£15,429,000	-£1,247,000	£14,471,000	£16,137,000	-£1,666,000	£14,805,000	£16,956,000	-£2,151,000	£15,147,000	£17,395,000	-£2,248,000	**-£7,312,000**
Gedling	£15,527,921	£15,584,200	-£56,279	£14,633,691	£16,206,649	-£1,572,958	£14,717,620	£16,753,607	-£2,035,987	£14,913,015	£15,043,858	-£130,843	**-£3,796,067**
Mansfield	£17,334,000	£17,572,000	-£238,000	£17,304,000	£19,928,000	-£2,624,000	£17,703,000	£20,948,000	-£3,245,000	£17,703,000	£20,948,000	-£3,245,000	**-£9,352,000**
Newark & Sherwood	£20,647,000	£20,647,000	£0	£19,337,000	£21,618,000	-£2,281,000	£19,639,000	£21,974,000	-£2,335,000	£19,950,000	£22,629,000	-£2,679,000	**-£7,295,000**
Rushcliffe	£19,888,700	£16,338,900	£3,549,800	£14,278,400	£15,439,500	-£1,161,100	£14,848,800	£15,906,400	-£1,057,600	£15,445,800	£16,263,200	-£817,400	**£513,700**
Nottingham City	£331,800,000	£355,068,000	-£23,268,000	£344,000,000	£372,189,000	-£28,189,000	£349,116,000	£390,103,000	-£40,987,000	£354,307,000	£409,835,000	-£55,528, 000	**−£147,972,000**

Deep dive into the MTFS figures

Outlined is the extent to which each council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) has incorporated the potential impacts of the Fair Funding Review, and on any wider support or fiscal levers which could affect the projected financial position of the new unitary authorities.

Council	Included Fair Funding impact to Income?	Receiving Exceptional Financial Support?	Anticipated use of reserves through life of MTFS?	Description
Nottinghamshire County	No	No	Yes	The impact of Business Rates reform, the Fair Funding Review and reforms to Social Care funding are all acknowledged as risks within the MTFS, but assumed impacts of these changes have not been built into the base budget or MTFS. The 2025/26 budget proposes to directly utilise £46.5m of reserves over the MTFS period (see page 40).
Bassetlaw	Yes (in supplementary data return)	No	Yes	Bassetlaw's position reported to Cabinet and budget Council in February identified a decline in income over the course of the MTFS which has been confirmed as reflecting anticipated impacts of the Fair Funding review which will require further identification of savings and/or additional use of reserves. The MTFS sets out an intention to reduce revenue reserves up to March 2029 whilst maintaining a minimum General Fund balance of £3m and a minimum General Fund working balance of £1m over the life of the MTFS (page 13).
Ashfield	Yes	No	Yes (only 2025/26)	Ashfield's MTFS acknowledges the uncertainty from the proposed Fair Funding review and wider changes to local government finance from 2026/27 (page 14). As a result, the MTFS models a "worst case" scenario which projects an annual reduction in income from 2026/27-2027/28 based on the LG Futures financial model. No use of reserves is forecast beyond 2025/26 where £4.253m of reserves is projected to be used to meet an identified funding gap.
Broxtowe	No	No	Yes	Broxtowe's MTFS does not model a decrease in Revenue Support Grants from Government and presupposes a continuation of current business rate retention mechanisms. While the MTFS assumes a reduction in reserve balance from £4,347m to -£2.856m in 2028/29. However, this does not factor in savings and efficiencies set out in the authority's Business Strategy which sets an expectation of an anticipated budget underspend (pages 5-7).
Gedling	Yes	No	Yes	Gedling's MTFS does reflect assumed impacts of the Fair Funding Review but this has minimal impact on income but does acknowledges outcomes of Fair Funding Review and Business Rates retention as risks to the MTFS projections. The MTFS assumes transfers from reserves budgets totalling £3.74m to balance the shortfall between income and expenditure, and identifies a need to identify £4.467m of efficiencies to maintain a balanced MTFS (page 19).
Mansfield	Yes (in supplementary data return)	No	No	While Mansfield's published MTFS does not model the impact of fair funding reforms, subsequent data provided by finance leads estimates an increase in income for 2028/29 arising from this. The MTFS does not use reserves to achieve a budget balance (but acknowledges the need to increase reserve balances as a result of depletions over recent years).
Newark & Sherwood	Yes	No	Yes	The MTFS assumes a reduction in government grants from 26/27 as a result of the outcomes from the Fair Funding Review (page 2). The MTFS shows a gap in funding from 2025/26 to 2028/29 of £8.882m. The Council has mitigation plans that will deliver savings and generate additional income of £3.186m. The balance of the shortfall of £5.696m will be funded by use of the MTFP reserve. This reserve was specifically set up for the purpose of bridging the gap in funding resulting from the Fair Funding Review and the Business Rates baseline re-set. By the end of 2028/29 it is forecast that this reserve will have a balance remaining of £2.566m.
Rushcliffe	Yes	No	Yes	The business rates reset has been built into the budget from 2026/27 and assumes no loss due to fairer funding. From 2027/28 the budget includes the effect of a reset and some growth (2%).
Nottingham City	No	Yes	No	A request for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) was made on 31 December 2024 in accordance with MHCLG deadline for up to a further c£35m, being £25m for 2025/26 and a further £10m for 2026/27 bringing the total EFS to £100m (page 10). The MTFS does not assume additional use of General Fund reserves to balance budgets over and above earmarked reserves over the life of the MTFS.

3. Estimated impact of Local Government Reorganisation

The estimated aggregation benefits for Option 1B as a whole are set out on this page.

Table 1 quantifies the maximum annualised benefit realisable (which will be realised in 2030/31) for:

- **Staffing:** Benefits from reduction in duplicated roles across leadership, front office, service delivery, and back office internal and enabling services and strategic roles.
- **Third Party Spend (TPS):** Benefits from reduction in addressable spend across all in-scope service areas.
- **Democracy:** Benefits from changing the number of councillors and streamlining elections.
- **Property:** Benefits from reduced operational expenditure spent on rationalised assets (i.e. surplus assets).

Table 2 applies an assumed phasing of aggregation benefits agreed with section 151 officers in July 2025 to calculate the benefit realised in each year following vesting.

Option 1B | Aggregation Benefits

Table 1: Maximum annualised benefit realisable through LGR from reduced spend on staffing, third party spend, democracy and property operating costs.

		TOTAL	**North** *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe*	**South** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling*
Estimated Staffing Benefits				
Senior Leadership Structures savings	**Recurring**	£8,681,498	£6,201,070	£2,480,428
Front Office Reorganisation savings	**Recurring**			
Service Delivery Reorganisation savings	**Recurring**	£7,654,170	£6,807,873	£846,297
Back Office Reorganisation savings	**Recurring**			
TOTAL FTE BENEFITS	**Recurring**	£16,335,668	£13,008,943	£3,326,725
Estimated Third Party Spend Benefits				
TPS Aggregation savings	**Recurring**	£9,018,354	£6,564,991	£2,453,363
Estimated Democracy Benefits				
Allowances+SRA savings+Election costs	**Recurring**	£1,783,602	£1,414,008	£369,595
Estimated Property Benefits				
Property OpEx savings	**Recurring**	£3,435,116	£2,520,439	£914,677
Total Aggregation Benefits (when 100% is realised from 2030/31)	**Recurring**	**£30,572,741**	**£23,508,381**	**£7,064,360**

Table 2: Gross aggregation benefit by year

Aggregation benefits					
Financial year	**28/29**	**29/30**	**30/31**	**31/32**	**32/33**
Year following vesting	**Y1**	**Y2**	**Y3**	**Y4**	**Y5**
Total Aggregation Benefits	£9,171,822	£15,286,371	£30,572,741	£30,572,741	£30,572,741
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	£7,052,514	£11,754,191	£23,508,381	£23,508,381	£23,508,381
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	£2,119,308	£3,532,180	£7,064,360	£7,064,360	£7,064,360
Aggregation benefits profile	**30%**	**50%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

The estimated aggregation benefits for Option 1E as a whole are set out on this page.

Table 1 quantifies the maximum annualised benefit realisable (which will be realised in 2030/31) for:

- **Staffing:** Benefits from reduction in duplicated roles across leadership, front office, service delivery, and back office internal and enabling services and strategic roles.
- **Third Party Spend (TPS):** Benefits from reduction in addressable spend across all in-scope service areas.
- **Democracy:** Benefits from changing the number of councillors and streamlining elections.
- **Property:** Benefits from reduced operational expenditure spent on rationalised assets (i.e. surplus assets).

Table 2 applies an assumed phasing of aggregation benefits agreed with section 151 officers in July 2025 to calculate the benefit realised each year following vesting.

Option 1E | Aggregation Benefits

Table 1: Maximum annualised benefit realisable through LGR from reduced spend on staffing, third party spend, democracy and property operating costs.

		TOTAL	North *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling*	South *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe*
Estimated Staffing Benefits				
Senior Leadership Structures savings	**Recurring**	£8,681,498	£6,201,070	£2,480,428
Front Office Reorganisation savings	**Recurring**	£7,654,170	£6,932,412	£721,758
Service Delivery Reorganisation savings	**Recurring**			
Back Office Reorganisation savings	**Recurring**			
TOTAL FTE BENEFITS	**Recurring**	£16,335,668	£13,133,482	£3,202,186
Estimated Third Party Spend Benefits				
TPS Aggregation savings	**Recurring**	£9,018,354	£6,473,715	£2,544,640
Estimated Democracy Benefits				
Allowances+SRA savings+Election costs	**Recurring**	£1,783,602	£1,341,434	£442,169
Estimated Property Benefits				
Property OpEx savings	**Recurring**	£3,435,116	£2,478,523	£956,593
Total Gross aggregation benefits (when 100% is realised from 2030/31)	**Recurring**	**£30,572,742**	**£23,427,154**	**£7,145,588**

Table 2: Gross aggregation benefit by year

Aggregation benefits					
Financial year	**28/29**	**29/30**	**30/31**	**31/32**	**32/33**
Year following vesting	**Y1**	**Y2**	**Y3**	**Y4**	**Y5**
Total Aggregation Benefits	£9,171,823	£15,286,371	£30,572,742	£30,572,742	£30,572,742
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling)*	£7,028,146	£11,713,577	£23,427,154	£23,427,154	£23,427,154
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	£2,143,676	£3,572,794	£7,145,588	£7,145,588	£7,145,588
Aggregation benefits profile	**30%**	**50%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

The estimated transition costs for Option 1B as a whole are set out on this page.

- **New unitarites setup & closedown costs:** Spend to design the new UA and manage the change (training, comms, process redesign).
- **IT & Systems costs:** Spend on new / upgraded systems to support a single UA (e.g. finance, HR, CRM).
- **External transition, design and implementation support costs:** Resources needed to run the transformation programme (e.g. Project management)
- **Redundancy Costs:** Payments and support for staff reductions due to structural changes.
- **Salary Alignment:** Additional staffing costs to align to the same payscale
- **Contingency:** A buffer for unexpected costs, reflecting risk and **complexity.**

Option 1B | Transition Costs

One off transition costs for Option 1B as a whole	**North** *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe*	***South*** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling*
External transition/design/implementation support	£4,270,000	£4,270,000
Internal programme management	£1,903,200	£1,903,200
ICT (integration, migration, licensing)	£1,192,500	£1,192,500
Comms & rebranding	£366,000	£366,000
Public consultation	£205,875	£205,875
Organisation closedown	£152,500	£152,500
Creating the new council(s)	£610,000	£610,000
Redundancy costs	£3,902,683	£998,018
Salary alignment	£5,375,473	£1,246,258
Contingency	£3,387,927	£3,387,927
Total	£21,366,157	£14,332,277

Transition costs over a five year period (and apportionment)

	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Total One-Off Transition Costs (£M)	£10,709,530	£10,709,530	£10,709,530	£3,569,843	£0
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	£6,409,847	£6,409,847	£6,409,847	£2,136,616	£0
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	£4,299,683	£4,299,683	£4,299,683	£1,433,228	£0
Aggregation cost profile	**30%**	**30%**	**30%**	**10%**	**0%**

The estimated transition costs for Option 1E as a whole are set out on this page.

- **New unitarites setup & closedown costs:** Spend to design the new UA and manage the change (training, comms, process redesign).
- **IT & Systems costs:** Spend on new / upgraded systems to support a single UA (e.g. finance, HR, CRM).
- **External transition, design and implementation support costs:** Resources needed to run the transformation programme (e.g. Project management)
- **Staffing:** Redundancy payments and support for staff reductions due to structural changes and the costs of salary alignment.
- **Salary Alignment:** Additional staffing costs to align to the same payscale
- **Contingency:** A buffer for unexpected costs, reflecting risk and **complexity.**

Option 1E | Transition Costs

One off transition costs for Option 1E as a whole	**North** *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling*	***South*** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe*
External transition/design/implementation support	£4,270,000	£4,270,000
Internal programme management	£1,903,200	£1,903,200
ICT (integration, migration, licensing)	£1,192,500	£1,192,500
Comms & rebranding	£366,000	£366,000
Public consultation	£205,875	£205,875
Organisation closedown	£152,500	£152,500
Creating the new council(s)	£610,000	£610,000
Redundancy costs	£3,940,045	£960,656
Salary alignment	£5,540,905	£741,117
Contingency	£3,387,927	£3,387,927
Total	**£21,568,951**	**£13,789,774**

Transition costs over a five year period (and apportionment)

	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Total One-Off Transition Costs	£10,607,618	£10,607,618	£10,607,618	£3,535,873	**£0**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling)*	£6,470,685	£6,470,685	£6,470,685	£2,156,895	**£0**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	£4,136,932	£4,136,932	£4,136,932	£1,378,977	**£0**
Aggregation cost profile	**30%**	**30%**	**30%**	**10%**	**0%**

This page collates the phased benefits and costs of reorganisation to identify a total cumulative net benefit for each proposed unitary authority for Option 1B.

Option 1B | Cost/benefit overview

North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*

Financial Year	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Year after vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Yearly Benefit	£7,052,514	£11,754,191	£23,508,381	£23,508,381	£23,508,381
Yearly Cost	£6,409,847	£6,409,847	£6,409,847	£2,136,616	£0
Cumulative Benefit	£7,052,514	£18,806,705	£42,315,086	£65,823,468	£89,331,849
Cumulative Cost	£6,409,847	£12,819,694	£19,229,541	£21,366,157	£21,366,157
Total Cumulative Net Benefit	£642,667	£5,987,011	£23,085,545	£44,457,311	£67,965,692
Payback period	0.91 years				

South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*

Financial Year	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Year after vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Yearly Benefit	£2,119,308	£3,532,180	£7,064,360	£7,064,360	£7,064,360
Yearly Cost	£4,299,683	£4,299,683	£4,299,683	£1,433,228	£0
Cumulative Benefit	£2,119,308	£5,651,488	£12,715,849	£19,780,209	£26,844,570
Cumulative Cost	£4,299,683	£8,599,366	£12,899,049	£14,332,277	£14,332,277
Total Cumulative Net Benefit	-£2,180,375	-£2,947,878	-£183,200	£5,447,932	£12,512,293
Payback period	3.03 years				

This page collates the phased benefits and costs of reorganisation to identify a total cumulative net benefit for each proposed unitary authority for Option 1E.

Option 1E | Cost/benefit overview

North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling)*

Financial Year	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Year after vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Yearly Benefit	£7,028,146	£11,713,577	£23,427,154	£23,427,154	£23,427,154
Yearly Cost	£6,470,685	£6,470,685	£6,470,685	£2,156,895	£0
Cumulative Benefit	£7,028,146	£18,741,723	£42,168,877	£65,596,032	£89,023,186
Cumulative Cost	£6,470,685	£12,941,371	£19,412,056	£21,568,951	£21,568,951
Total Cumulative Net Benefit	£557,461	£5,800,353	£22,756,821	£44,027,080	£67,454,234
Payback period	0.92 years				

South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*

Financial Year	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Year after vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Yearly Benefit	£2,143,676	£3,572,794	£7,145,588	£7,145,588	£7,145,588
Yearly Cost	£4,136,932	£4,136,932	£4,136,932	£1,378,977	£0
Cumulative Benefit	£2,143,676	£5,716,470	£12,862,058	£20,007,645	£27,153,233
Cumulative Cost	£4,136,932	£8,273,864	£12,410,797	£13,789,774	£13,789,774
Total Cumulative Net Benefit	-£1,993,256	-£2,557,394	£451,261	£6,217,871	£13,363,459
Payback period	2.85 years				

4. Transformation scenarios following reorganisation

Local Government Reorganisation has previously been seen as a catalyst for wider transformation in order to realise additional financial and non-financial benefits in addition to those achieved through reorganisation.

This analysis sets out some different scenarios for costs and benefits available for each unitary authority through additional transformation activity. In particular, it explores different assumptions about the phasing of the costs of mobilising transformation programmes for each unitarity authority. In each scenario there is a "base" and "stretch" case (and cost assumptions).

Any estimated benefits of transformation are of course subject to effective implementation, and the analysis assumes that each authority would instigate a transformation programme rapidly following reorganisation.

Transformation | Scenario overview

Three transformation scenarios have been developed as part of this analysis.

Scenario A assumes that 100% of the cost of transformation is applied in year 1 (2028/29). This provides an illustration of the total costs of transformation for each authority (see further pages 24 and 26), but is not reflective of a programme that may, in reality, run over a number of years (for example to implement a target operating model and innovate new models of service delivery).

Scenario A	**Year 1** *(2028/29)*	**Year 2** *(2029/30)*	**Year 3** *(2030/31)*	**Year 4 -10**
Benefits *(cumulative)*	25%	50%	100%	100%
Transformation costs *(one-off)*	100%			

Scenario B assumes that costs of transformation are phased over four years, with 30% of costs borne for each of the first three years, with 10% incurred in year 4.

Scenario B	**Year 1** *(2028/29)*	**Year 2** *(2029/30)*	**Year 3** *(2030/31)*	**Year 4 -10**
Benefits *(cumulative)*	25%	50%	100%	100%
Transformation costs *(one-off)*	30%	30%	30%	10%

Scenario C projects a scenario where the costs of mobilising and delivering transformation are front loaded in to the first two years, with a reduced cost being borne in years 3-4 (for example for sustaining programme management capacity to assure ongoing benefit.

Scenario C	**Year 1** *(2028/29)*	**Year 2** *(2029/30)*	**Year 3** *(2030/31)*	**Year 4 -10**
Benefits *(cumulative)*	25%	50%	100%	100%
Transformation costs *(one-off)*	40%	40%	10%	10%

Local Government Reorganisation has previously been seen as a catalyst for wider transformation in order to realise additional financial and non-financial benefits in addition to those achieved through reorganisation.

This analysis sets out some different scenarios for costs and benefits available for each unitary authority through additional transformation activity. In particular, it explores different assumptions about the phasing of the costs of mobilising transformation programmes for each unitarity authority. In each scenario there is a “base” and “stretch” case (and cost assumptions).

Any estimated benefits of transformation are of course subject to effective implementation, and the analysis assumes that each authority would instigate a transformation programme rapidly following reorganisation.

Transformation | Scenario overview

Three transformation scenarios have been developed as part of this analysis.

Scenario A assumes that 100% of the cost of transformation is applied in year 1 (2028/29). This provides an illustration of the total costs of transformation for each authority (see further pages 24 and 26), but is not reflective of a programme that may, in reality, run over a number of years (for example to implement a target operating model and innovate new models of service delivery).

Scenario A	**Year 1** *(2028/29)*	**Year 2** *(2029/30)*	**Year 3** *(2030/31)*	**Year 4 -10**
Benefits *(cumulative)*	25%	50%	100%	100%
Transformation costs *(one-off)*	100%			

Scenario B assumes that costs of transformation are phased over four years, with 30% of costs borne for each of the first three years, with 10% incurred in year 4.

Scenario B	**Year 1** *(2028/29)*	**Year 2** *(2029/30)*	**Year 3** *(2030/31)*	**Year 4 -10**
Benefits *(cumulative)*	25%	50%	100%	100%
Transformation costs *(one-off)*	30%	30%	30%	10%

Scenario C projects a scenario where the costs of mobilising and delivering transformation are front loaded in to the first two years, with a reduced cost being borne in years 3-4 (for example for sustaining programme management capacity to assure ongoing benefit.

Scenario C	**Year 1** *(2028/29)*	**Year 2** *(2029/30)*	**Year 3** *(2030/31)*	**Year 4 -10**
Benefits *(cumulative)*	25%	50%	100%	100%
Transformation costs *(one-off)*	40%	40%	10%	10%

4a. Transformation scenario a:

100% year 1 costs

Option 1B | Transformation Benefits

Estimated transformation benefits and costs for Option 1B are set out on this page.

The table shows what the maximum annual benefits arising from transformation would be under base and stretch scenarios (assumed to take effect in 2030/31).

Benefits are drawn from three areas:

- **Staffing:** Benefits from reduction in roles, realisable through operating model transformation.
- **Third party spend:** Reduced reliance on third party spend through transformation of commissioning, procurement and digital estate.
- **Income:** transformation of commercial capabilities to derive more income (e.g. from assets).

Costs are calculated based on experience of transformation programme costs from other local authorities and public sector organisations.

Benefit Area	Base Savings Assumption	Stretch Savings Assumption	North *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe*		South *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling*	
			100% of Base benefits	100% of Stretch benefits	100% of Base benefits	100% of Stretch benefits
Front office FTE reduction	6.00%	10.00%	£14,707,345	£21,690,483	£15,282,639	£22,538,931
Service delivery FTE reduction	3.00%	5.00%				
Back office FTE reduction	7.00%	8.00%				
Third Party Spend (TPS) reduction	2.50%	3.00%	£10,777,527	£12,933,033	£10,719,494	£12,863,393
Income uplift (SFC, commercial) uplift	1.30%	1.70%	£8,430,763	£11,024,844	£7,726,838	£10,104,327
Cost Area						
IT Investment Costs			£4,550,000	£9,100,000	£4,550,000	£9,100,000
Operating Model Construct & Change Management			£4,550,000	£5,850,000	£4,550,000	£5,850,000
Programme Support Costs			£1,300,000	£1,950,000	£1,300,000	£1,950,000
Contingency			£1,365,000	£2,242,500	£1,365,000	£2,242,500
Redundancy costs			£4,412,203	£6,507,145	£4,584,792	£6,761,679

The estimated transformation benefits for Option 1B are set out on this page.

These are additional benefits which the new UAs could achieve post-vesting day through transformation for example, by implementing digital technology, AI, automation, and redesigned operating models.

These potential savings are over and above aggregation benefits identified above.

The scope of transformation savings would need to be refined by the new authorities including identifying individual opportunities and establishing programmes of work.

Option 1B | Transformation Benefits

Net Summary base				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	£16,911,152	£33,822,304	£67,644,607	£67,644,607
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	£8,478,909	£16,957,818	£33,915,635	£33,915,635
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	£8,432,243	£16,864,486	£33,728,972	£33,728,972
North Total Costs	£16,177,203	£0	£0	£0
South Total Costs	£16,349,792	£0	£0	£0
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Payback period North	1.45 years			
Payback period South	1.47 years			

Net Summary stretch				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	£22,788,753	£45,577,506	£91,155,012	£91,155,012
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	£11,412,090	£22,824,180	£45,648,360	£45,648,360
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	£11,376,663	£22,753,326	£45,506,651	£45,506,651
North Total Costs	£25,754,003	£0	£0	£0
South Total Costs	£25,792,109	£0	£0	£0
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Payback period North	1.63 years			
Payback period South	1.63 years			

Option 1E | Transformation Benefits

The component parts of the transformation benefits and costs for Option 1E are set out on this page.

The table demonstrates what the maximum annual benefits arising from transformation would be under base and stretch scenarios (assumed to take effect in 2030/31).

Benefits are drawn from three areas:

- **Staffing:** Benefits from reduction in roles, realisable through operating model transformation.
- **Third party spend:** Reduced reliance on third party spend through transformation of commissioning, procurement and digital estate.
- **Income:** transformation of commercial capabilities to derive more income (e.g. from assets).

Costs are calculated on the basis of transformation programme costs from other local authorities and public sector organisations.

Benefit Area	Base Savings Assumption	Stretch Savings Assumption	**North** *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling*		***South*** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe*	
			100% of Base benefits	100% of Stretch benefits	100% of Base benefits	100% of Stretch benefits
Front office FTE reduction	6.00%	10.00%	£14,943,213	£22,038,343	£15,029,340	£22,165,364
Service delivery FTE reduction	3.00%	5.00%				
Back office FTE reduction	7.00%	8.00%				
Third Party Spend (TPS) reduction	2.50%	3.00%	£10,627,682	£12,753,218	£10,869,340	£13,043,208
Income uplift (SFC, commercial) uplift	1.30%	1.70%	£8,295,280	£10,847,674	£7,862,321	£10,281,497
Cost Area						
IT Investment Costs			£4,550,000	£9,100,000	£4,550,000	£9,100,000
Operating Model Construct & Change Management			£4,550,000	£5,850,000	£4,550,000	£5,850,000
Programme Support Costs			£1,300,000	£1,950,000	£1,300,000	£1,950,000
Contingency			£1,365,000	£2,242,500	£1,365,000	£2,242,500
Redundancy costs			£4,482,964	£6,611,503	£4,508,802	£6,649,609

Option 1E | Transformation Benefits

The estimated transformation benefits for Option 1E are set out on this page.

These are additional benefits which the new UAs could achieve post-vesting day through transformation for example, by implementing digital technology, AI, automation, and redesigned operating models.

These potential savings are over and above aggregation benefits identified above.

The scope of transformation savings would need to be refined by the new authorities including identifying individual opportunities and establishing programmes of work.

Net Summary base				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	£16,906,794	£33,813,588	£67,627,176	£67,627,176
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling)*	£8,466,544	£16,933,088	£33,866,175	£33,866,175
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	£8,440,250	£16,880,500	£33,761,001	£33,761,001
North Total Costs	£16,247,964	£0	£0	£0
South Total Costs	£16,273,802	£0	£0	£0
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Payback period North	1.46 years			
Payback period South	1.46 years			

Net Summary stretch				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	£22,782,326	£45,564,652	£91,129,304	£91,129,304
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling)*	£11,409,809	£22,819,618	£45,639,236	£45,639,236
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	£11,372,517	£22,745,034	£45,490,068	£45,490,068
North Total Costs	£25,754,003	£0	£0	£0
South Total Costs	£25,792,109	£0	£0	£0
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Payback period North	1.63 years			
Payback period South	1.63 years			

4b. Transformation scenario b:

Costs phased in line with transition cost assumptions

Option 1B | Transformation Benefits

The estimated transformation benefits for Option 1B are set out on this page.

These are additional benefits which the new UAs could achieve post-vesting day through transformation for example, by implementing digital technology, AI, automation, and redesigned operating models.

These potential savings are over and above aggregation benefits identified above (previous slide).

The scope of transformation savings would need to be refined by the new authorities including identifying individual opportunities and establishing programmes of work.

In this scenario, the phasing of the cost of transformation over multiple years means that the authorities would see a net benefit in year 1 (hence payback periods of less than 1 year). However, it should be noted that authorities would bear a cost for transformation activity over four years rather than in one as in scenario A.

Net Summary base				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	**£16,911,152**	**£33,822,304**	**£67,644,607**	**£67,644,607**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	**£8,478,909**	**£16,957,818**	**£33,915,635**	**£33,915,635**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**£8,432,243**	**£16,864,486**	**£33,728,972**	**£33,728,972**
North Total Costs	£4,853,161	£4,853,161	£4,853,161	£1,617,720
South Total Costs	£4,904,938	£4,904,938	£4,904,938	£1,634,979
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	30.00%	30.00%	30.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	Less than 1 year			
Payback period South	Less than 1 year			

Net Summary stretch				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	**£22,788,753**	**£45,577,506**	**£91,155,012**	**£91,155,012**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	**£11,412,090**	**£22,824,180**	**£45,648,360**	**£45,648,360**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**£11,376,663**	**£22,753,326**	**£45,506,651**	**£45,506,651**
North Total Costs	£7,694,893	£7,694,893	£7,694,893	£2,564,964
South Total Costs	£7,771,254	£7,771,254	£7,771,254	£2,590,418
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	30.00%	30.00%	30.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	Less than 1 year			
Payback period South	Less than 1 year			

Option 1E | Transformation Benefits

The estimated transformation benefits for Option 1E are set out on this page.

These are additional benefits which the new UAs could achieve post-vesting day through transformation for example, by implementing digital technology, AI, automation, and redesigned operating models.

These potential savings are over and above aggregation benefits identified above (previous slide).

The scope of transformation savings would need to be refined by the new authorities including identifying individual opportunities and establishing programmes of work.

In this scenario, the phasing of the cost of transformation over multiple years means that the authorities would see a net benefit in year 1 (hence payback periods of less than 1 year). However, it should be noted that authorities would bear a cost for transformation activity over four years rather than in one as in scenario A.

Net Summary base				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	**£16,906,794**	**£33,813,588**	**£67,627,176**	**£67,627,176**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling)*	**£8,466,544**	**£16,933,088**	**£33,866,175**	**£33,866,175**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**£8,440,250**	**£16,880,500**	**£33,761,001**	**£33,761,001**
North Total Costs	£4,874,389	£4,874,389	£4,874,389	£1,624,796
South Total Costs	£4,882,141	£4,882,141	£4,882,141	£1,627,380
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	30.00%	30.00%	30.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	**Less than 1 year**			
Payback period South	**Less than 1 year**			

Net Summary stretch				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	**£22,782,326**	**£45,564,652**	**£91,129,304**	**£91,129,304**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling)*	**£11,409,809**	**£22,819,618**	**£45,639,236**	**£45,639,236**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**£11,372,517**	**£22,745,034**	**£45,490,068**	**£45,490,068**
North Total Costs	£7,726,201	£7,726,201	£7,726,201	£2,575,400
South Total Costs	£7,737,633	£7,737,633	£7,737,633	£2,579,211
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	30.00%	30.00%	30.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	**Less than 1 year**			
Payback period South	**Less than 1 year**			

4c. **Transformation scenario c:** *Alternative cost phasing profile*

Option 1B | Transformation Benefits

The estimated transformation benefits for Option 1B are set out on this page.

These are additional benefits which the new UAs could achieve post-vesting day through transformation for example, by implementing digital technology, AI, automation, and redesigned operating models.

These potential savings are over and above aggregation benefits identified above (previous slide).

The scope of transformation savings would need to be refined by the new authorities including identifying individual opportunities and establishing programmes of work.

In this scenario, the phasing of the cost of transformation over multiple years means that the authorities would see a net benefit in year 1 (hence payback periods of less than 1 year). This is, however, a lower net benefit for years 1 and 2 when compared with Scenario B as a result of the assumed higher cost phasing for these initial years of transformation.

Net Summary base				
Financial year	**28/29**	**29/30**	**30/31**	**31/32**
Year following vesting	**Y1**	**Y2**	**Y3**	**Y4 -10**
Total Benefits	**£16,911,152**	**£33,822,304**	**£67,644,607**	**£67,644,607**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	**£8,478,909**	**£16,957,818**	**£33,915,635**	**£33,915,635**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**£8,432,243**	**£16,864,486**	**£33,728,972**	**£33,728,972**
North Total Costs	£6,470,881	£6,470,881	£1,617,720	£1,617,720
South Total Costs	£6,539,917	£6,539,917	£1,634,979	£1,634,979
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	40.00%	40.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	**Less than 1 year**			
Payback period South	**Less than 1 year**			

Net Summary stretch				
Financial year	**28/29**	**29/30**	**30/31**	**31/32**
Year following vesting	**Y1**	**Y2**	**Y3**	**Y4 -10**
Total Benefits	**£22,788,753**	**£45,577,506**	**£91,155,012**	**£91,155,012**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	**£11,412,090**	**£22,824,180**	**£45,648,360**	**£45,648,360**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**£11,376,663**	**£22,753,326**	**£45,506,651**	**£45,506,651**
North Total Costs	£10,259,858	£10,259,858	£2,564,964	£2,564,964
South Total Costs	£10,361,672	£10,361,672	£2,590,418	£2,590,418
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	40.00%	40.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	**Less than 1 year**			
Payback period South	**Less than 1 year**			

The estimated transformation benefits for Option 1E are set out on this page.

These are additional benefits which the new UAs could achieve post-vesting day through transformation for example, by implementing digital technology, AI, automation, and redesigned operating models.

These potential savings are over and above aggregation benefits identified above (previous slide).

The scope of transformation savings would need to be refined by the new authorities including identifying individual opportunities and establishing programmes of work.

In this scenario, the phasing of the cost of transformation over multiple years means that the authorities would see a net benefit in year 1 (hence payback periods of less than 1 year). This is, however, a lower net benefit for years 1 and 2 when compared with Scenario B as a result of the assumed higher cost phasing for these initial years of transformation.

Option 1E | Transformation Benefits

Net Summary base				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	**£16,906,794**	**£33,813,588**	**£67,627,176**	**£67,627,176**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood,Gedling)*	**£8,466,544**	**£16,933,088**	**£33,866,175**	**£33,866,175**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**£8,440,250**	**£16,880,500**	**£33,761,001**	**£33,761,001**
North Total Costs	£6,499,186	£6,499,186	£1,624,796	£1,624,796
South Total Costs	£6,509,521	£6,509,521	£1,627,380	£1,627,380
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	40.00%	40.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	**Less than 1 year**			
Payback period South	**Less than 1 year**			

Net Summary stretch				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	**£22,782,326**	**£45,564,652**	**£91,129,304**	**£91,129,304**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood,Gedling)*	**£11,409,809**	**£22,819,618**	**£45,639,236**	**£45,639,236**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**£11,372,517**	**£22,745,034**	**£45,490,068**	**£45,490,068**
North Total Costs	£10,301,601	£10,301,601	£2,575,400	£2,575,400
South Total Costs	£10,316,844	£10,316,844	£2,579,211	£2,579,211
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	40.00%	40.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	**Less than 1 year**			
Payback period South	**Less than 1 year**			

5. Summary position

This page summarises the key components of the financial case for local government reorganisation, and the impact on the two proposed new unitary authorities for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

The analysis summarises:

- the inherited net budget position that each proposed unitary authority would inherit under the two options;
- projected costs and benefits realisable through reorganisation;
- financial disbenefits accrued through the transfers of services between the proposed UA areas;
- costs and benefits of post-reorganisation transformation activity in a "base" scenario.

LGR | Summary of financial case

Option 1b

	28/29 Cumulative budget gap [1]	**One-off LGR transition Costs**	**Projected transition benefit** [2] *(recurring)*	**Projected transformation costs (base)**	**Projected transformation benefit (base)** [3]
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	£43,483,641	£21,366,157	£23,508,381	£16,177,203	£33,915,635
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	£70,906,860	£14,332,277	£7,064,360	£16,349,792	£33,728,972

Option 1e

	28/29 Cumulative budget gap [1]	**One-off LGR transition Costs**	**Projected transition benefit** [2] *(recurring)*	**Projected transformation costs (base)**	**Projected transformation benefit (base)**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Gedling, Newark and Sherwood*	£42,231,311	£21,568,951	£23,427,154	£16,247,964	£33,866,175
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	£72,159,190	£13,789,774	£7,145,588	£16,273,802	£33,761,001

Notes:

[1] Assumes MTFS savings delivery, reserves transfer and exceptional financial support are delivered.

[2] Represents 100% of projected transition benefit *(due to take effect in year 3 - 2030/31)*

[3] Represents 100% of projected transformation benefit *(due to take effect in year 3 - 2030/31), as considered in Scenario A*

6. Council Tax Harmonisation scenarios

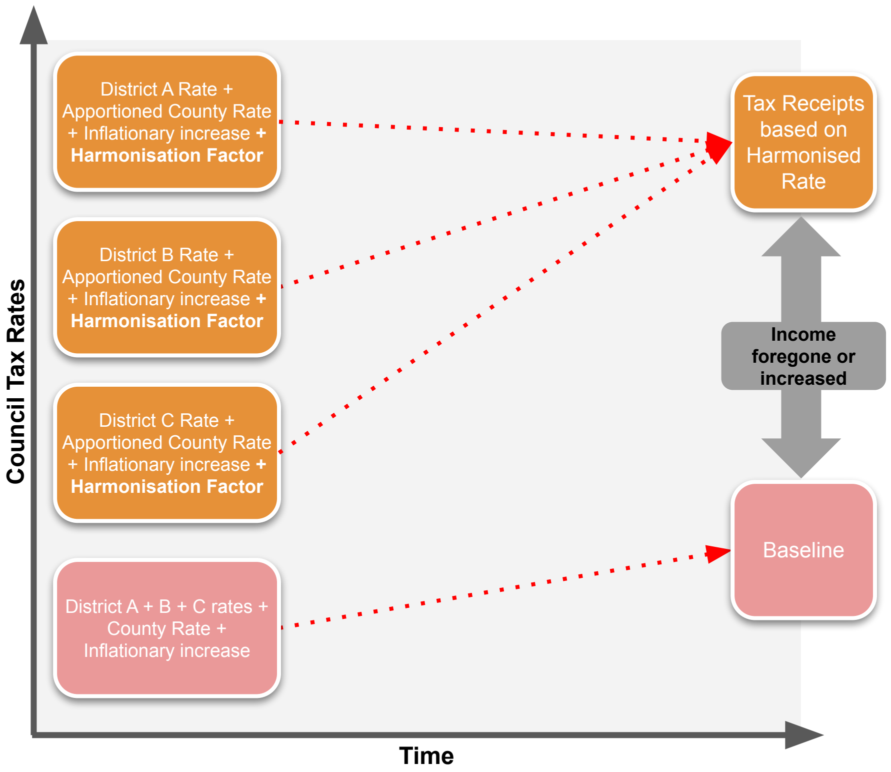
Council Tax Harmonisation is the process which brings the existing bands of tax payable across districts together to form a single future set of bands for a newly formed authority.

Under the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Finance) Regulations 2008, the same level of council tax should be in payment across the whole of the new authority area within seven years of vesting day.

This therefore represents a fiscal lever available to the new unitary authorities as they undertake their initial financial planning following vesting.

This may involve increasing taxes to the highest among the current rates, reducing to the lowest, or bringing taxes towards a calculated median point. Additionally, a 'weighted average' approach can be employed which prevents significant changes for taxpayers. The time taken to make the adjustment will influence the difference between the income from current rates, and the harmonised rate which may represent income foregone or increased over the harmonisation period.

Council Tax | Low, Medium, High Approaches



Harmonising to the highest current rate is likely to lead to larger increases for citizens paying less tax currently, but is also likely to forego less income - and potentially to generate additional income in some areas.

Harmonising to the average (mean) will result in changes to all rates (as the mean is unlikely to exactly equal one of the existing rates). The overall impact will vary depending on the current tax structure.

Harmonising to the lowest current rate is likely to forego the greatest income, but has the lowest impact on rates in areas with lower taxation. This may be seen as more equitable but is more costly in terms of income

Note: The setting of council tax rates is a member function and will be exercised by either a shadow or continuing authority. These scenarios are therefore presented to demonstrate the potential implications of the various available approaches. It should also be noted that the new unitaries are not required to take the same approach to harmonisation as each other.

Following LGR there is a requirement to harmonise council tax rates, to ensure that all parts of a new unitary area are paying the same rate within a maximum of seven years. An alternative approach used in some areas follows a “weighted average” method to harmonise rates from day 1.

The weighted-average option is modelled on the projected FY28/29 Band D rate for each local authority. The weighted weighted Band D charge is calculated by dividing total council tax by the total tax base.

This sets the single rate equal to the weighted average of existing rates, so there is no material change to aggregate council tax income (unlike phasing over several years, which changes timing and distributional impacts).

Council Tax | Weighted Average

Option 1b	Area	2028/29 Rate	Weighted Average Rate	Impact on the Resident
North	Bassetlaw	£2,418	£2,411	-£7
	Ashfield	£2,419	£2,411	-£8
	Mansfield	£2,419	£2,411	-£8
	Newark & Sherwood	£2,410	£2,411	£0
	Rushcliffe	£2,393	£2,411	£18
South	Nottingham City UA	£2,619	£2,511	-£108
	Broxtowe	£2,405	£2,511	£106
	Gedling	£2,406	£2,511	£105

Following LGR there is a requirement to harmonise council tax rates, to ensure that all parts of a new unitary area are paying the same rate within a maximum of seven years. An alternative approach used in some areas follows a "weighted average" method to harmonise rates from day 1.

The weighted-average option is modelled on the projected FY28/29 Band D rate for each local authority. The weighted weighted Band D charge is calculated by dividing total council tax by the total tax base.

This sets the single rate equal to the weighted average of existing rates, so there is no material change to aggregate council tax income (unlike phasing over several years, which changes timing and distributional impacts).

Council Tax | Weighted Average

Option 1e	Area	2028/29 Rate	Weighted Average Rate	Impact on the Resident
North	Bassetlaw	£2,418	£2,414	-£4
	Ashfield	£2,419	£2,414	-£5
	Gedling	£2,406	£2,414	£8
	Mansfield	£2,419	£2,414	-£5
	Newark & Sherwood	£2,410	£2,414	£4
South	Nottingham City UA	£2,619	£2,501	-£118
	Broxtowe	£2,405	£2,501	£96
	Rushcliffe	£2,393	£2,501	£108

A summary of the projected council tax receipts for each authority under Option 1b has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- **Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)**
- Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in council tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on council tax. This is especially pertinent for "mid" and "high" scenarios. While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an 'Alternative Notional Amount' this would require the approval of MHCLG.

Council Tax | 1 year harmonisation scenarios

Option	Unitary Authority	Harmonisation level	Final Band D level in 2029/30	Average change in council tax rate	Income foregone/received over respective year
1b	**North** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark & Sherwood and Rushcliffe)*	**Low**	£2,508	**4.00%**	**Low- £3.67M** **Mid- £323K** **High- £1.8M**
		Mid	£2,528	**4.81%**	
		High	£2,535	**5.12%**	
	South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**Low**	£2,521	**1.78%**	**Low- £16.8M** **Mid- £5.3M** **High- £17.7M**
		Mid	£2,597	**4.88%**	
		High	£2,750	**11.02%**	

A summary of the projected council tax receipts for each authority under Option 1e has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- **Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)**
- Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in council tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on council tax. This is especially pertinent for "mid" and "high" scenarios. While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an 'Alternative Notional Amount' this would require the approval of MHCLG.

Council Tax | 1 year harmonisation scenarios

Option	Unitary Authority	Harmonisation level	Final Band D level in 2029/30	Average change in council tax rate	Income foregone/received over respective year
1e	**North** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Gedling, Newark & Sherwood and Mansfield)*	**Low**	£2,522	**4.44%**	**Low- £1.6M** **Mid- £79.7K** **High- £992.2k**
		Mid	£2,531	**4.81%**	
		High	£2,535	**5.00%**	
	South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**Low**	£2,508	**1.46%**	**Low- £18.1M** **Mid- £4.5M** **High- £20.9M**
		Mid	£2,593	**4.88%**	
		High	£2,750	**11.22%**	

A summary of the projected council tax receipts for each authority under option 1b has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)
- **Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)**
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in council tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on council tax. This is especially pertinent for "mid" and "high" scenarios. While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an 'Alternative Notional Amount' this would require the approval of MHCLG.

Council Tax | 3 year harmonisation scenarios

Option	Unitary Authority	Harmonisation level	Final Band D level in 2031/32	Average change in council tax rate	Income foregone/received over respective year
1b	**North** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark & Sherwood and Rushcliffe)*	**Low**	£2,756	**4.55%**	**Low- £7.6M** **Mid- £704.5K** **High- £3.8M**
		Mid	£2,777	**4.81%**	
		High	£2,785	**4.91%**	
	South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**Low**	£2,770	**3.80%**	**Low- £37.8M** **Mid- £11.9M** **High- £39.0M**
		Mid	£2,857	**4.88%**	
		High	£3,031	**6.96%**	

A summary of the projected council tax receipts for each authority under option 1e has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)
- **Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)**
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in council tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on council tax. This is especially pertinent for "mid" and "high" scenarios. While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an 'Alternative Notional Amount' this would require the approval of MHCLG.

Council Tax | 3 year harmonisation scenarios

Option	Unitary Authority	Harmonisation level	Final Band D level in 2031/32	Average change in council tax rate	Income foregone/received over respective year
1e	**North** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Gedling, Newark & Sherwood and Mansfield)*	**Low**	£2,771	**4.69%**	**Low- £3.3M** **Mid- £193.5K** **High- £2.1M**
		Mid	£2,780	**4.81%**	
		High	£2,785	**4.87%**	
	South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**Low**	£2,756	**3.69%**	**Low- £40.6M** **Mid- £10.1M** **High- £46.1M**
		Mid	£2,852	**4.88%**	
		High	£3,031	**7.03%**	

A summary of the projected council tax receipts for each authority under option 1b has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)
- Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)
- **Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)**

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in council tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on council tax. This is especially pertinent for "mid" and "high" scenarios. While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an 'Alternative Notional Amount' this would require the approval of MHCLG.

Council Tax | 7 year harmonisation scenarios

Option	Unitary Authority	Harmonisation level	Final Band D level in 2035/36	Average change in council tax rate	Income foregone/received over respective year
1b	**North** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark & Sherwood and Rushcliffe)*	**Low**	£3,330	**4.71%**	**Low- £15.9M** **Mid- £1.9M** **High- £8.7M**
		Mid	£3,353	**4.82%**	
		High	£3,362	**4.86%**	
	South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**Low**	£3,344	**4.38%**	**Low- £92.9M** **Mid- £29.1M** **High- £96.0M**
		Mid	£3,458	**4.88%**	
		High	£3,683	**5.83%**	

A summary of the projected council tax receipts for each authority under option 1e has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)
- Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in council tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on council tax. This is especially pertinent for "mid" and "high" scenarios. While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an 'Alternative Notional Amount' this would require the approval of MHCLG.

Council Tax | 7 year harmonisation scenarios

Option	Unitary Authority	Harmonisation level	Final Band D level in 2035/36	Average change in council tax rate	Income foregone/received over respective year
1e	**North** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Gedling, Newark & Sherwood and Mansfield)*	**Low**	£3,346	**4.80%**	**Low- £6.7M** **Mid- £800.4K** **High- £4.9M**
		Mid	£3,356	**4.82%**	
		High	£3,362	**4.84%**	
	City UA *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**Low**	£3,330	**4.34%**	**Low- £98.8M** **Mid- £24.4M** **High- £113.4M**
		Mid	£3,452	**4.88%**	
		High	£3,683	**5.86%**	

Appendix F

CIPFA Financial Case Template

This is submitted separately as it is an Excel spreadsheet.

The future of local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Engagement report

September 2025

LGR Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

public perspectives

Research, consultation and evaluation for the public and charitable sectors.

Contents

The future of local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire – Engagement report

Executive Summary

Introduction and background

1. Nottinghamshire is a two-tier area served by seven district and borough councils and a county council. The city of Nottingham is contained within the boundary of Nottinghamshire, with all council services in the area provided by Nottingham City Council, which is a unitary council. In total, nine different councils provide services across the county.
2. In February 2025, as part of the Government's local government reorganisation plans, it contacted local councils in areas such as Nottinghamshire to work together to draw up initial proposals to reduce the number of councils by replacing two-tier councils with larger unitary councils.
3. Following considering key criteria and a range of potential options, Nottinghamshire's councils submitted an interim proposal to Government in March 2025. They propose to create two new unitary councils that would be responsible for all council services in their areas and replace the existing nine councils.
4. An important part of the local government reorganisation process is engaging with residents and stakeholders. This report relates to an engagement exercise about the councils' proposals to replace the nine existing councils with new unitary councils, including different options for the configuration of the future councils. The councils have been supported to conduct the engagement process by independent organisation, Public Perspectives.
5. The results of the engagement exercise will be used to inform the development of the councils' final proposals for the future of local councils in Nottinghamshire, alongside a range of evidence. This must be submitted to Government by 28 November 2025, and feedback on how any proposal will be taken forward for Nottingham is expected in 2026, and then subject to statutory consultation by Government.

Approach to the engagement

6. The engagement exercise was conducted over a six-week period ending on Sunday 14 September 2025.
7. The main mechanism for capturing responses was an online questionnaire open to all interested parties, promoted through councils' websites, communication channels and promotional/marketing activity, including a dedicated website (lgrnotts.org), as well as outreach events and engagement with stakeholders.
8. The questionnaire was also available in alternative formats on request, such as paper copies, alongside e-mail, phone, BSL and translation support. The questionnaire is available at appendix 1.
9. Relatedly, four focus groups were conducted involving 34 local residents reflecting the diversity of Nottinghamshire and organised by urban and rural areas. These focus groups allowed the emerging findings from the engagement process to be unpacked and views about the proposals to be discussed in-depth, both adding further insight as well as

validating the findings from the engagement survey. The focus group discussion guide is available at appendix 2.

10. In total, the engagement questionnaire received 11,483 responses.

Key findings and points for consideration

Local area

11. **Sense of place and identity is layered** with respondents **anchoring their description to Nottingham City** (e.g. near Nottingham or north of Nottingham), **followed by Nottinghamshire (the county)**, and then **refined by naming specific towns** or local villages (especially for those areas further away from Nottingham City such as Mansfield, Newark and Worksop), or well-known areas/landmarks or **cultural references such as Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood.** There are also **occasional regional references** such as 'the middle of England' or the 'East Midlands'.

12. In more **rural areas**, respondents often emphasised the rurality e.g. 'a small village', 'the countryside'. In more **urban areas** they tended to reference 'the city' or the nearest town. Whilst there is a **tendency to look inwards within the county and towards Nottingham City** (especially for those areas bordering the city), some respondents in **areas that border other counties and major urban areas or landmarks will also make reference to these.** There are also tendencies to draw clear **distinctions between urban and rural areas and those that live in or near the city and those in other areas of Nottingham, while local authority names are not often used as reference points or forms of identity.**

13. Most respondents are **proud of their local area**, with respondents that live in the Rushcliffe, Gedling and Broxtowe council areas having higher levels of pride about their local area than other locations. There is a **distinction between being proud of their local areas, and satisfaction and advocacy of their local council**, regardless as to whether they hold positive perceptions or not of their council.

Effectiveness of the current council structure and services

14. **Over half of respondents said the current structure and approach to service delivery in councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is effective.** Respondents in Rushcliffe, Gedling and Broxtowe council areas have the highest ratings of effectiveness, while respondents in Nottingham City have the lowest.

15. Those rating the system **effective** tend to highlight **service reliability, local knowledge and responsiveness, local representation, and a sense that the current system is fit for purpose.** Those who said **neither effective or ineffective** often expressed **mixed experiences.** Those rating the system **ineffective** often emphasised issues related to a two-tier system such as **confusion, duplication, inefficiency, lack of joined-up/partnership working, political distrust, and inequity and inconsistency in services between different local councils**, with some advocating for change and unitary authorities.

Local Government Reorganisation in England

16. Respondents identified several **potential benefits** of the Government's proposed reorganisation of local councils, with **efficiency and cost savings being the most common,** particularly through reduced duplication and streamlined services by forming unitary councils. Other perceived advantages included greater geographic and administrative coherence, a simpler and clearer council structure, improved coordination and joined-up working, enhanced service quality and outcomes, and fairer, more consistent access to services. However, around **one in five respondents were sceptical**, seeing no real benefits or expressing doubt about whether the potential benefits could be realised in practice, with slightly higher levels of scepticism in Rushcliffe and Broxtowe council areas.

17. The main **concerns** about the Government's proposed reorganisation of local councils **centred on fears of urban–rural imbalance**, particularly that Nottingham City could dominate and rural areas would lose voice, priority, and tailored services. **Financial risks** were also a major worry, with doubts about high reorganisation costs, savings not being realised, or neighbouring areas having to cover Nottingham City's perceived financial struggles.

18. **Other key concerns included loss of local representation, accountability, and knowledge**, potential decline in service quality and disruption during transition, and **doubts about efficiency, with larger councils seen as possibly more bureaucratic.** Smaller proportions mentioned risks of job losses and staff disruption, politicisation and distrust of motives, and argued for reform within the current system or no change at all. Around 5% of respondents expressed no concerns. Concerns were broadly consistent across areas, but stronger in Rushcliffe and Broxtowe council areas, particularly regarding urban–rural imbalance and financial risks.

19. In addition, a few participants in the focus groups **questioned how the proposals align with wider reforms**, noting that the mix of regional devolution, other public bodies/offices, and new governance structures risks creating confusion rather than simplification. They felt the approach adds layers while removing others, leading to disruption, costs, and a system that remains just as complex.

Future councils

20. Respondents said that any new council should **focus on delivering good quality core and universal services/issues** such as roads and pavements, crime and anti-social behaviour, clean streets, and travel and transport, alongside **value for money and meeting local needs.**

21. Relatedly, respondents highlighted the **importance of involving residents in decision-making and local area/neighbourhood working** to ensure that future councils understand and are responsive to the needs of different communities and areas, including urban and rural (this was considered important in general and especially important in the context of larger unitary councils). Consequently, they want to see mechanisms in place to ensure this continues and thrives in future arrangements. This can include local area forums, research and consultation to identify local issues and priorities, engaging with local councillors, and working closely with town and parish councils as well as local community and voluntary groups. They also wanted engagement and consultation to be genuine and meaningful, leading to positive change.

22. Throughout the engagement results, there are differences in experience, perceptions and opinion by different demographic groups. The reasons for this are not unpicked in this report, although it highlights the **importance of understanding local issues and**

priorities and tailoring services and support to different communities (both equality groups, different localities and urban-rural communities) as part of any future arrangements.

Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

23. **Over half disagree with the proposal to reduce the number of councils from the existing nine to two new larger unitary councils**, with a relationship between perceived effectiveness of the current system and levels of agreement i.e. in other words, those that consider the current system ineffective are more likely to state there is a case for change. Respondents in Nottingham City are more likely to agree with the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two than respondents in other areas. In contrast, respondents in Broxtowe, Rushcliffe and Gedling council areas are less likely to agree.

24. Those that **agreed tended to state that the proposals would reduce duplication, generate efficiencies and consequently lead to cost-savings**, while a smaller number also said that it would lead to a **simplification of the system and therefore improved accessibility.** This said, support was often conditional upon potential benefits being realised, including savings being re-invested into better services or lower council tax.

25. Those that disagreed are **concerned about fairness and equitability, especially in relation to an urban-rural imbalance.** Similarly, they are concerned about a **loss of local representation, knowledge and accountability**, and associated issues around **access to services and responsiveness to local issues.** Some respondents **oppose local government reorganisation in general**, with concerns that implementation will be disruptive, and **improvements and savings will not be achieved in practice.** There is also some **distrust about the motives** behind the proposals and **concern that neighbouring areas will inherit perceived financial and service delivery issues experienced by Nottingham City.** This said, it is **worth noting that the concerns were mainly about larger councils not necessarily moving to a unitary model.**

The Options

Option 1b

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling (known as Option 1b). This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Rushcliffe. The second covering Gedling, Broxtowe, and Nottingham City.

26. Around half of respondents **expressed concerns about Option 1b, particularly that the proposed boundaries are illogical or unfair**, with some urban areas excluded (such as neighbouring urban areas with close links to the city, such as West Brigford) and rural areas included that lack alignment with Nottingham City (such as in some parts of Broxtowe Borough Council area). Many were also concerned about **perceived Nottingham City Council's financial and management issues**, fearing neighbouring areas could be drawn into these perceived problems, face higher council tax, or experience declining services, as well as **rural voices lost within a council dominated by Nottingham City** - concerns especially strong in Broxtowe and Gedling council areas.

27. Nonetheless, around one in ten respondents supported the option, but largely on the condition that it delivers genuine efficiencies, cost savings, and service improvements. This said, **some participants that live in Gedling Borough Council area were more agnostic**

about the option, given their proximity and relationship to Nottingham City. Participants living in other parts of Nottinghamshire had less to say about this option (or all the options) because they would not be in a council with Nottingham City. However, there were some concerns about **being in a large council covering such a large and diverse area.**

Option 1e

This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Gedling. The second covering Broxtowe, Nottingham City, and Rushcliffe.

28. **Option 1e received more support than 1b, with around a third of respondents viewing it positively or as the better of the two, particularly for its clearer North–South split and perceived geographic logic.** Nottingham City and Gedling respondents were more supportive than other respondents, though concerns remained about boundary choices, especially the inclusion of rural areas with little connection to the city (such as in the south of Rushcliffe Borough Council area) and exclusion of closer areas that were seen as more integrated with Nottingham City, such as some parts of Gedling Borough Council and Ashfield District Council.
29. **Consistent worries included perceptions about Nottingham City's financial challenges and the risk of neighbouring areas 'bailing it out', as well as rural–urban imbalance and loss of local voice**, particularly in Broxtowe and Rushcliffe council areas. Around one-in-ten opposed the option outright, questioning the evidence base and feasibility of benefits. Some respondents also suggested alternative models, such as a single county-wide council, a smaller city-focused unitary alongside a wider county council, or a three-council structure dividing north, south, and city areas.

Other considerations

30. Respondents often said they wanted **more information** to better understand the reasons for the proposals, the evidence base, and the potential benefits and challenges, highlighting the continued importance of effective communications.
31. They also want any **changes to be conducted seamlessly and with as little disruption as possible**, so that services and outcomes are not undermined and any potential benefits realised.

The future of local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire – Engagement report

Main report

Section 1: Introduction

Introduction and background

1.1. Nottinghamshire is a two-tier area served by seven district and borough councils and a county council. The city of Nottingham is contained within the boundary of Nottinghamshire, with all council services in the area provided by Nottingham City Council, which is a unitary council. In total, nine different councils provide services across the county.

1.2. In February 2025, as part of the Government's local government reorganisation plans, it contacted local councils in areas such as Nottinghamshire to work together to draw up initial proposals to reduce the number of councils by replacing two-tier councils with larger unitary councils.

1.3. Following considering key criteria and a range of potential options, Nottinghamshire's councils submitted an interim proposal to Government in March 2025. They propose to create two new unitary councils that would be responsible for all council services in their areas and replace the existing nine councils.

1.4. An important part of the local government reorganisation process is engaging with residents and stakeholders. This report relates to an engagement exercise about the councils' proposals to replace the nine existing councils with new unitary councils, including different options for the configuration of the future councils. The councils have been supported to conduct the engagement process by independent organisation, Public Perspectives.

1.5. The results of the engagement exercise will be used to inform the development of the councils' final proposals for the future of local councils in Nottinghamshire, alongside a range of evidence. This must be submitted to Government by 28 November 2025, and feedback on how any proposal will be taken forward for Nottingham is expected in 2026, and then subject to statutory consultation by Government.

Approach to the engagement

1.6. The engagement exercise was conducted over a six-week period ending on Sunday 14 September 2025.

1.7. The main mechanism for capturing responses was an online questionnaire open to all interested parties, promoted through councils' websites, communication channels and promotional/marketing activity, including a dedicated website (lgrnotts.org), and partner toolkits.

1.8. The questionnaire was also available in alternative formats on request, such as paper copies, alongside e-mail, phone, BSL and translation support. The questionnaire is available at appendix 1.

1.9. Local councils also supported some community outreach and engagement events, promoting the engagement exercise with residents and stakeholders, including businesses.

1.10. In addition, local councils drew-up a list of key stakeholders who were directly contacted and invited to participate in the engagement exercise. This included town and parish councils, VCSE organisations and local businesses, as well as strategic and pan-Nottinghamshire organisations.

1.11. Relatedly, four focus groups were conducted involving 34 local residents reflecting the diversity of Nottinghamshire and organised by urban and rural areas. These focus groups allowed the emerging findings from the engagement process to be unpacked and views about the proposals to be discussed in-depth, both adding further insight as well as validating the findings from the engagement survey. The focus group discussion guide is available at appendix 2.

1.12. In total, the engagement questionnaire received 11,483 responses.

1.13. The following table summarises the background of respondents:

Figure 1.1: Background of respondent*

A resident living in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire	96%
Someone who works in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire	26%
A voluntary or community organisation	1%
A Town or Parish Council	1%
A District / Borough / City / County Council employee	7%
Another public sector organisation	0%
A local councillor	1%
A business owner or business leader operating in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire	2%
Other	1%

*Respondents could select more than one answer, hence why responses add up to over 100%.

1.14. The following table shows the local council area in which respondents live and compares this to the population sizes in each local council area. As is the nature with self-selecting/open-access questionnaires, the responses are not proportional to the population sizes in each of the local council areas.[1] Consequently, the results are analysed (and in some cases presented) both as they are and also re-weighted to be in-line with the population sizes in each local council area.

Figure 1.2: Location of respondents

Location	Respondents	Population*
Ashfield District Council area	5%	11%
Bassetlaw District Council area	9%	10.3%
Broxtowe Borough Council area	22%	9.7%
Gedling Borough Council area	16%	10.2%
Mansfield District Council area	4%	9.6%
Newark and Sherwood District Council area	7%	10.7%
Nottingham City Council area	10%	28.2%
Rushcliffe Borough Council area	26%	10.4%
Outside of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	2%	N/A

*Based on Census 2021.

[1] The level of response is influenced, in part, by the degree to which the proposals and options may affect a local council area.

1.15. There is a spread of responses across different demographic groups, albeit a skew towards older and more affluent groups, which is common in self-selecting/open-access questionnaires such as this.

Figure 1.3: Demographic profile of respondents (only asked to those that live in Nottinghamshire)

Sex	
Female	49%
Male	45%
Another term	0%
Prefer not to say	5%
Age	
Under 18	0%
18-24	1%
25-34	7%
35-44	13%
45-54	18%
55-64	23%
65 and over	31%
Prefer not to say	7%
Disability	
Yes, which reduce my ability to carry out my day-to-day activities a lot	6%
Yes, which reduce my ability to carry out my day-to-day activities a little	10%
Yes, but they don’t reduce my ability to carry out my day-to-day activities at all	10%
No	64%
Prefer not to say	10%
Ethnicity	
White British-Irish	82%
Non-White British-Irish	7%
Prefer not to say	11%
Housing situation	
Owner-occupier	80%
Privately renting	5%
Renting from the council or housing association	4%
Other	2%
Prefer not to say	9%

Reporting

1.16. The rest of this report presents the key findings from the engagement questionnaire and focus groups. The results have been analysed against all demographic and key variables/questions to identify any important differences in opinion between different groups. In particular, the focus is on geography i.e. the local council area respondents live in.

1.17. In addition, the open-ended comments received in the questionnaire have been reviewed and key themes presented in the report.

1.18. The focus group insights are integrated alongside the engagement questionnaire findings, including exemplifying quotes.

1.19. The report is organised in-keeping with the structure of the engagement questionnaire and focus groups, as follows:

- Section 2: Your local area
- Section 3: The current way councils are organised in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
- Section 4: Local Government Reorganisation in England
- Section 5: Future councils
- Section 6: Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Section 2: Your local area

Introduction

2.1. This section presents findings about respondents' views on their local area, including movement across the county, sense of place and council services/priorities.

Where is your main place of work or study? by Which council area do you live in?

Respondents tend to work or study in areas closest to where they live, while notable proportions that live outside Nottingham work or study in the city, especially those council areas that border it

2.2. Respondents tend to work or study in the same council areas they live in, especially those that live in Nottingham City (69%), Bassetlaw (68%) and Newark and Sherwood (61%) council areas.

2.3. Notable proportions that live outside Nottingham work or study in the city, especially those council areas that border it (Gedling – 33%, Broxtowe – 29%, Rushcliffe – 24% and Ashfield - 23%).

2.4. In addition, there are also notable proportions that work or study across the county. Similarly, there are notable proportions that work or study outside of the county, especially those council areas that neighbour other counties or urban areas (Bassetlaw – 17%, Broxtowe – 17% and Rushcliffe – 15%).

Figure 2.1: Movement across Nottinghamshire

	Council area live in							
Main place of work or study	**Ashfield**	**Bassetlaw**	**Broxtowe**	**Gedling**	**Mansfield**	**Newark and Sherwood**	**Notting-ham**	**Rushcliffe**
Ashfield District Council area	**47%**	1%	2%	3%	9%	2%	1%	0%
Bassetlaw District Council area	1%	**68%**	0%	1%	3%	4%	0%	0%
Broxtowe Borough Council area	3%	0%	**43%**	3%	1%	1%	4%	2%
Gedling Borough Council area	3%	1%	2%	**40%**	4%	3%	3%	2%
Mansfield District Council area	9%	3%	1%	2%	**52%**	5%	1%	1%
Newark and Sherwood District Council area	2%	4%	0%	3%	6%	**61%**	1%	2%
Nottingham City Council area	**23%**	**2%**	**29%**	**33%**	**4%**	**8%**	**69%**	**24%**
Rushcliffe Borough Council area	2%	0%	3%	5%	2%	2%	7%	**48%**
Across all of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	12%	8%	10%	13%	17%	10%	9%	11%
Outside of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	9%	17%	17%	7%	10%	8%	10%	15%

Number of respondents: 7,658 (excludes respondents that do not study or work currently – 33%).

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

(Non-weighted results i.e. the results have not been changed to reflect the actual population sizes of a local council area. This is the case for all graphs and tables in this report. The weighted results, where presented, are referenced in separate paragraphs and clearly indicated).

How do you describe where you're from when talking to someone who doesn't live nearby? Which names or places do you mention?

Residents tend to anchor their description to Nottingham City and/or Nottinghamshire, with further mention of nearby towns or villages as well as well-known landmarks or cultural references

2.5. Respondents were asked how they describe where they are from when talking to someone who does not live nearby (only asked to respondents that live in Nottinghamshire – 10,945 responses). In summary, across Nottinghamshire **sense of place and identity is layered** with respondents **anchoring their description to Nottingham City** (e.g. near Nottingham or north of Nottingham), **followed by Nottinghamshire (the county)**, and then **refined by naming specific towns** or local villages (especially for those areas further away from Nottingham City such as Mansfield, Newark and Worksop), or well-known areas/landmarks or **cultural references such as Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood.**

2.6. There are also **occasional regional references** such as 'the middle of England' or the 'East Midlands'. In more **rural areas**, respondents often emphasis the rurality e.g. 'a small village', 'the countryside'. In more **urban areas** they will tend reference 'the city' or the nearest town. Whilst there is a **tendency to look inwards within the county and towards Nottingham City** (especially for those areas bordering the city), some respondents in **areas that border other counties and major urban areas or landmarks will also make reference to these.**

2.7. The following summarises the responses by each council area:

Ashfield District Council area

- Anchor to Nottingham plus local towns: Sutton-in-Ashfield, Kirkby-in-Ashfield and Hucknall, and also nearby Mansfield.
- Some wider mention of being part of Nottinghamshire County.
- Strong references to Robin Hood/Sherwood Forest connections.
- Directional framing ("north of Nottingham").

Bassetlaw District Council area

- Reference to key towns such as in or near Worksop or Retford.
- Occasional reference to being part of Nottinghamshire, alongside references to nearby Sheffield and Doncaster (due to proximity to South Yorkshire) (and more likely to reference these areas and look northwards than southwards to Nottingham City).
- Also mentions of Sherwood Forest as a notable local landmark.
- Some occasional mention of 'Bassetlaw' highlighting a sense of identity linked to the local council area.
- Also mentions of rurality and specific villages.

Broxtowe Borough Council area

- Nottingham City is commonly mentioned as an anchor reference point, for example 'near Nottingham'.
- This is accompanied by local identifiers of nearby towns such as Beeston, Eastwood, Kimberley, Stapleford, as well as rural areas, suburban areas and villages such as Bramcote, Chilwell and Nuthall.
- There is also occasional reference to IKEA as a landmark.

Gedling Borough Council area

- A common anchor point is reference to Nottingham, for example 'just north of Nottingham', 'just outside Nottingham' or 'near Nottingham'.
- Local towns and areas are also commonly reference in conjunction with reference to the city, such as Arnold, Carlton and Mapperley.

Mansfield District Council area

- Strong and primary emphasis on Mansfield as the main identifier, given its eponymous nature, history/heritage, and dominance of, and largest town within, the district.
- Some lesser references to Warsop as a smaller town in the district or Woodhouse.
- Frequent associated references to nearby Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood heritage.
- Nottingham City is also occasionally mentioned, but often in a secondary manner. For example, 'I live in Mansfield, a few miles north of Nottingham'.

Newark and Sherwood District Council area

- Newark-on-Trent is often referenced as an anchor point given its relative size, the main town in the area and where the council offices are located.
- Southwell (and sometimes the racecourse) and Ollerton are also mentioned. Depending on location, Mansfield is also sometimes mentioned as too Nottingham City itself, often as secondary markers. There is also occasional secondary mention of 'near Lincoln', depending on proximity.
- Landmark and cultural references are commonly made to Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood.

Nottingham City Council area

- The core reference is unsurprisingly Nottingham itself, with follow-up reference to specific locations within the city.
- There is sometimes secondary mention of wider landmarks, regional and cultural references such as Nottinghamshire, East Midlands or Robin Hood.

Rushcliffe Borough Council area

- Nottingham City is a common anchor reference, often framed as relative to 'the south of Nottingham'.
- There is often follow-up reference to specific towns and areas as a key local identifier, especially West Bridgford as the largest town in the area.
- Other notable areas mentioned include Bingham, Cotgrave, Radcliffe-on-Trent and Ruddington.
- There are also sometimes references to 'Rushcliffe' or near the 'River Trent'.
- Further south in the district into more rural areas such as Keyworth and East Leake there is less reference to Nottingham City and more reference to the wider county and/or rurality, as well as some reference to large nearby towns outside of the county, such as Loughborough.

Focus group insight:

The focus groups validate the points raised through the engagement survey about layered identity and sense of place, with **clear distinctions between urban and rural areas and those that live in or near the city and those in other areas of Nottingham:**

"I say I'm from Nottingham first, which most people have heard about and reflects how I feel about myself. If I need to clarify even further I might say Nottinghamshire, East Midlands or just the middle of England." *Urban participant*

"I say that I live near Nottingham. I'm on the outskirts and I don't really feel like I live in the city itself, but it's a good reference point and at the end of the day I spend quite a bit of time in Nottingham and I'm happy to be associated with it." *Urban participant*

"Not everyone has heard of Newark-on-Trent, so I might say that and follow it up by saying Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood, most people have heard of those." *Urban participant*

"I live in a small village in a rural area. I'm guess I'm not a million miles away from the city, but I definitely don't feel like I come from Nottingham or an urban area. But I do feel like I'm from Nottinghamshire and that's normally what I tell people." *Rural participant*

Focus group participants tended to say that they **do not specifically identify with their local authority in itself or would not typically use it as a reference point:**

"I live near Mansfield and that's how I'd introduce myself, but I wouldn't go as far as to say I live in Mansfield District." *Urban participant*

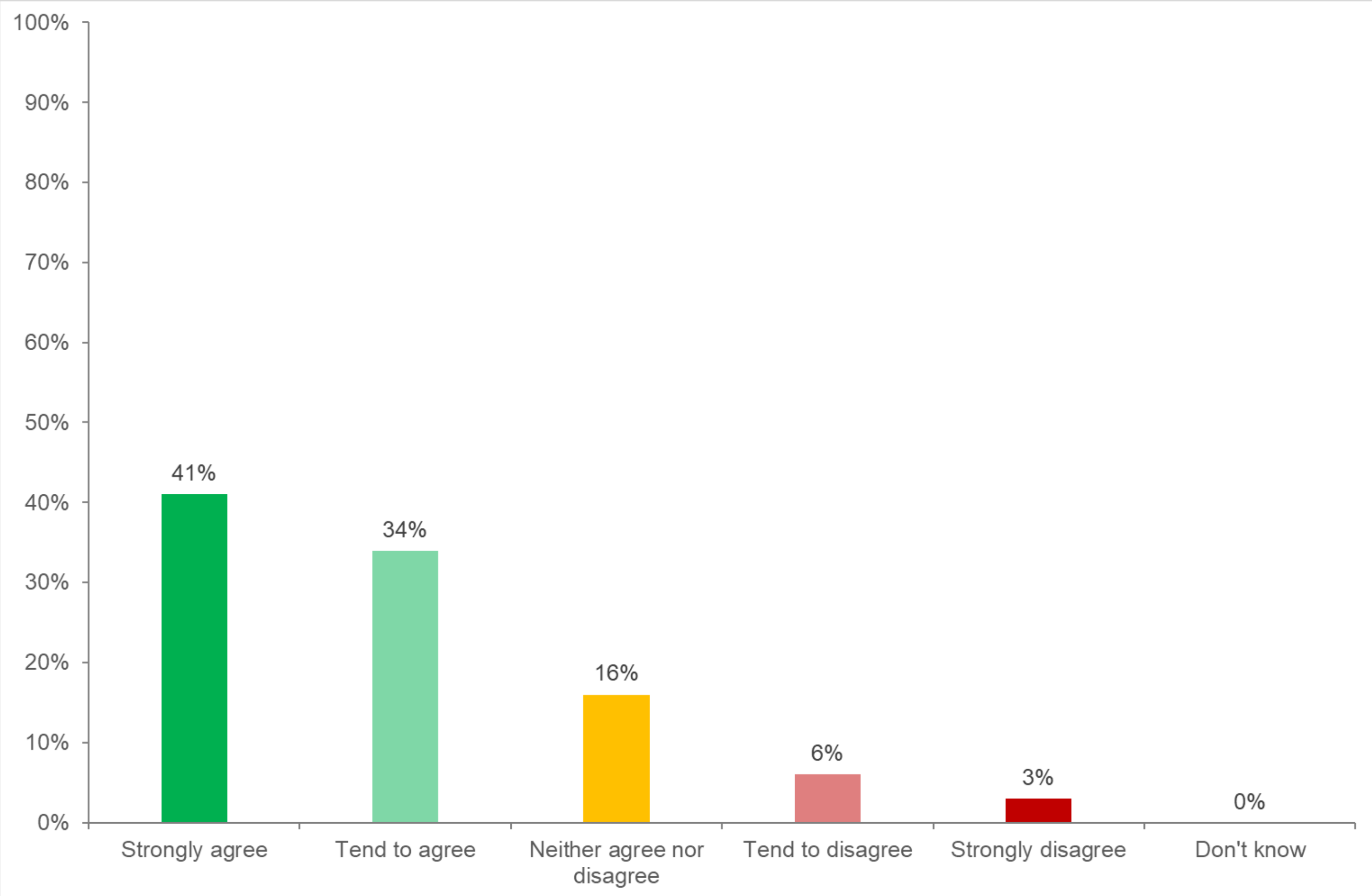
"I pay my council tax to Rushcliffe Borough Council. I'm pretty happy with them. But I don't say to people I'm from Rushcliffe or that I live in Rushcliffe Borough Council area. I only reference them if I'm talking about council stuff, like services, council tax or voting." *Rural participant*

To what extent do you agree or disagree that you are proud to live in your local area?

Three-quarters of respondents said they are proud to live in their local area with notable variation by council area

2.8. 75% of respondents are proud to live in their local area including 41% that strongly agree. Only 9% disagree.

Figure 2.2: Proud to live in local area



Number of respondents: 11,206 (only asked to respondents that live in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire).

Focus group insight:

The focus group participants highlighted a **distinction between being proud of their local areas and satisfaction and advocacy of their local council**, regardless as to whether they hold positive perceptions or not of their council:

"I like my local area, I like living here, but that's got nothing to do with whether I think my council are doing a good job or not. There's been lots of reported issues about the City Council and there's been issues that we've experienced, but I still enjoy living in the city and I'm proud to say I'm from Nottingham." *Urban participant*

"I think my council does a good job, in general. But when I think about my local area I don't really think about the council. They can affect my enjoyment of living here because if it's well looked after it improves my quality of life. But the reason I like living here is because of lots of other things specific to the area such as the location, ruralness and being close to lots of different places and attractions." *Rural participant*

2.9. Respondents that live in Rushcliffe (91% proud), Gedling (79% proud) and Broxtowe (78% proud) council areas have higher levels of pride about their local area than other locations, especially Mansfield council area (43% proud).

Figure 2.3: Proud to live in local area by council area

	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark and Sherwood	Notting-ham	Rushcliffe
Strongly agree	21%	26%	41%	40%	17%	32%	25%	63%
Tend to agree	33%	32%	37%	39%	26%	38%	35%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	24%	16%	17%	30%	20%	20%	7%
Tend to disagree	14%	10%	4%	3%	18%	7%	11%	1%
Strongly disagree	8%	8%	1%	1%	9%	3%	9%	0%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

2.10. Consequently, when the data is re-weighted by council area to be proportionate to population sizes across Nottinghamshire there is a change in the levels of pride in a downwards direction (as the locations with higher levels of pride have responded in greater numbers relative to their population size). The re-weighted data has 65% of respondents agreeing that they are proud and 15% disagreeing:

- Strongly agree: 31%
- Tend to agree: 34%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 20%
- Tend to disagree: 9%
- Strongly disagree: 6%
- Don't know: 0%

2.11. Respondents with lower levels of pride are:

- Aged 18-25: 58% proud compared with 75% of older respondents.
- People living with a disability: 70% proud compared with 78% of other respondents.
- Private and social renters: 65% proud compared with 77% of owner-occupiers.

Thinking generally, what would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live? And what are your priorities for improvement in the local area?

Core and universal services/issues such as roads and pavements, crime and anti-social behaviour, clean streets, and travel and transport are key priorities

2.12. 71% of respondents said that maintaining roads and pavements are the priority for improvement (and also second top cited as making somewhere a good place to live – cited by 83%).

2.13. 64% of respondents said crime and anti-social behaviour are priorities for improvement (third top cited as making somewhere a good place to live – cited by 81%).

2.14. 57% of respondents said clean streets are a priority, which is top cited as making somewhere a good place to live by 85% of respondents.

2.15. 53% noted public transport, roads and parking as priorities for improvement (also fourth cited as making somewhere a good place to live – cited by 80% of respondents).

2.16. Other core and universal services/issues such as refuse collection and recycling (cited by 40% as a priority for improvement), parks, sports and leisure facilities (42%) and health services (46%) also standout.

Figure 2.4: Important aspects in making somewhere a good place to live and priorities for improvement

	Making somewhere a good place to live (11,173)	Priority for improvement (11,123)
Keeping the streets and public areas clean and tidy	85%	57%
Maintaining roads and pavements	83%	71%
Tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing crime	81%	64%
Public transport, roads and parking	80%	53%
Refuse collection and recycling	77%	40%
Parks, sports and leisure facilities	77%	42%
Health services such as mental health services and promoting healthy lifestyles	68%	46%
Schools and places of learning	67%	32%
Decent and affordable homes	64%	35%
Support and services for older people and vulnerable groups	62%	37%
Activities and facilities for children and young people	61%	30%
Regeneration of town centres / high streets, including shops and markets	59%	41%
Jobs and supporting people into work	58%	32%
Community events and activities and supporting local community groups	58%	25%
Arts and cultural services such as theatres and museums	44%	16%
Supporting residents to reduce their impact on the environment	37%	20%

Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each question (only asked to respondents that live in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire). Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

2.17. In the ‘other’ responses, approximately 2-3% mentioned the importance of ‘sense of community’, while a similar proportion said a priority is increasing ‘community voice’ to influence decision-making and an associated improvement in governance of local councils and areas.

2.18. Whilst there are variations by council area (and also other demographics), these are not notable and the order of importance/priority is similar. Consequently, for succinctness, these are not presented in this report (although they are available in a separate document).

Focus group insight:

The focus groups reiterated the importance of **good quality core services and value for money**, and that these should be the priorities for any future council:

> “It isn’t rocket science. Councils spend lots of money on lots of things that often don’t matter to local people. All I really want my council to do is get the basics right – keep the streets clean, pick up my bins and don’t leave a mess when you do it, get rid of potholes and keep me and my family safe. Anything else on top of this is a bonus, but I’d rather pay a lower council tax than see money wasted on vanity projects.” *Urban participant*

Section 3: The current way councils are organised in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Introduction

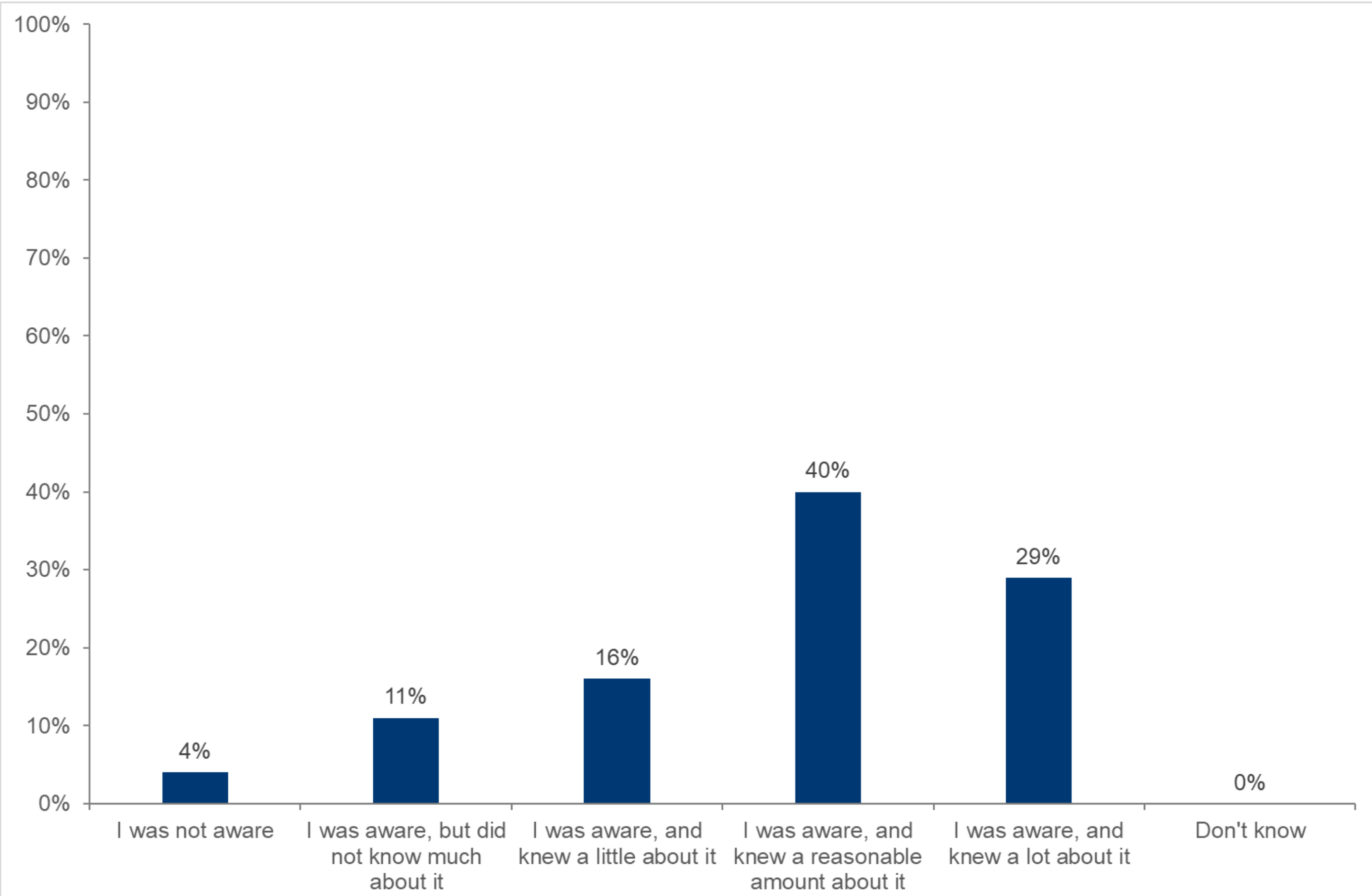
3.1. This section presents findings about the current ways councils are organised in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, including awareness and knowledge, and perceptions of effectiveness.

Before today, how aware were you of the current structure of councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and the services each council provides?

Most respondents were aware of the current structure of councils and the different services delivered, and had varying levels of knowledge

3.2. 96% of respondents were aware of the current structure of councils, including 29% that knew a lot about it, 40% a reasonable amount, 16% a little and 11% not much about it. 4% were not aware of the current structure of councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire before responding to the engagement survey.

Figure 3.1: Awareness and knowledge of the current structure of councils



Number of respondents: 11,424.

Focus group insight:

Participants in the focus groups had **varying levels of awareness and knowledge** of the current structure of councils in their area, including the two-tier system. In several cases this was **limited to an awareness that their council tax is shared between two councils** (in the case of non-Nottingham City residents), while others said their **use of services had made them aware, albeit also often confusing:**

> "I know that my council tax goes to both my District Council and the County Council. I think I know why and what each does, but don't test me. It can be a little confusing." *Rural participant*

> "I've had to deal with both councils during my time for different services, including the county council for social services. I'd say I'm now quite knowledgeable about it, but that's been hard won through bitter experience of having to navigate around the system." *Rural participant*

> "I know that Nottingham City delivers all services in the area, but what relationship does it have with the county and the neighbouring district and borough councils? It's always felt a bit odd. It's like the City is an island in amongst all these other councils. It doesn't feel that joined-up when you think about it." *Urban participant*

3.3. Respondents in Gedling (98% aware including 75% with at least reasonable knowledge), Rushcliffe (also 98% aware including 74% with at least reasonable knowledge) and Ashfield (96% aware including 72% with at least reasonable knowledge) are most awareness and knowledgeable. Respondents in Bassetlaw are least aware and knowledgeable (92% aware including 56% with at least reasonable knowledge).

Figure 3.2: Awareness and knowledge of the current structure of councils by council area

	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark and Sherwood	Notting-ham	Rushcliffe
I was not aware	4%	8%	5%	2%	6%	7%	5%	2%
I was aware, but did not know much about it	9%	17%	12%	7%	11%	11%	12%	9%
I was aware, and knew a little about it	14%	17%	19%	15%	15%	13%	16%	15%
I was aware, and knew a reasonable amount about it	37%	34%	41%	43%	31%	36%	37%	43%
I was aware, and knew a lot about it	35%	22%	23%	32%	36%	33%	30%	31%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

3.4. There are some minor changes when the data is re-weighted by council area to be proportionate to population sizes across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- Not aware: 5%
- Not know much: 11%
- Know a little: 16%
- Know a reasonable amount: 38%
- Know a lot: 30%
- Don't know: 0%

3.5. Respondents with lower levels of awareness and knowledge of the current structure of councils and the different services delivered are:

- Women: 25% know a lot compared with 33% of men.
- Aged under 35: 62% know at least a reasonable amount compared with 69% of older respondents.
- Non-White British-Irish: 57% know at least a reasonable amount compared with 69% of other respondents.
- Private renters and social renters: 61% of private renters and 51% of social renters know at least a reasonable amount compared with 70% of owner-occupiers.

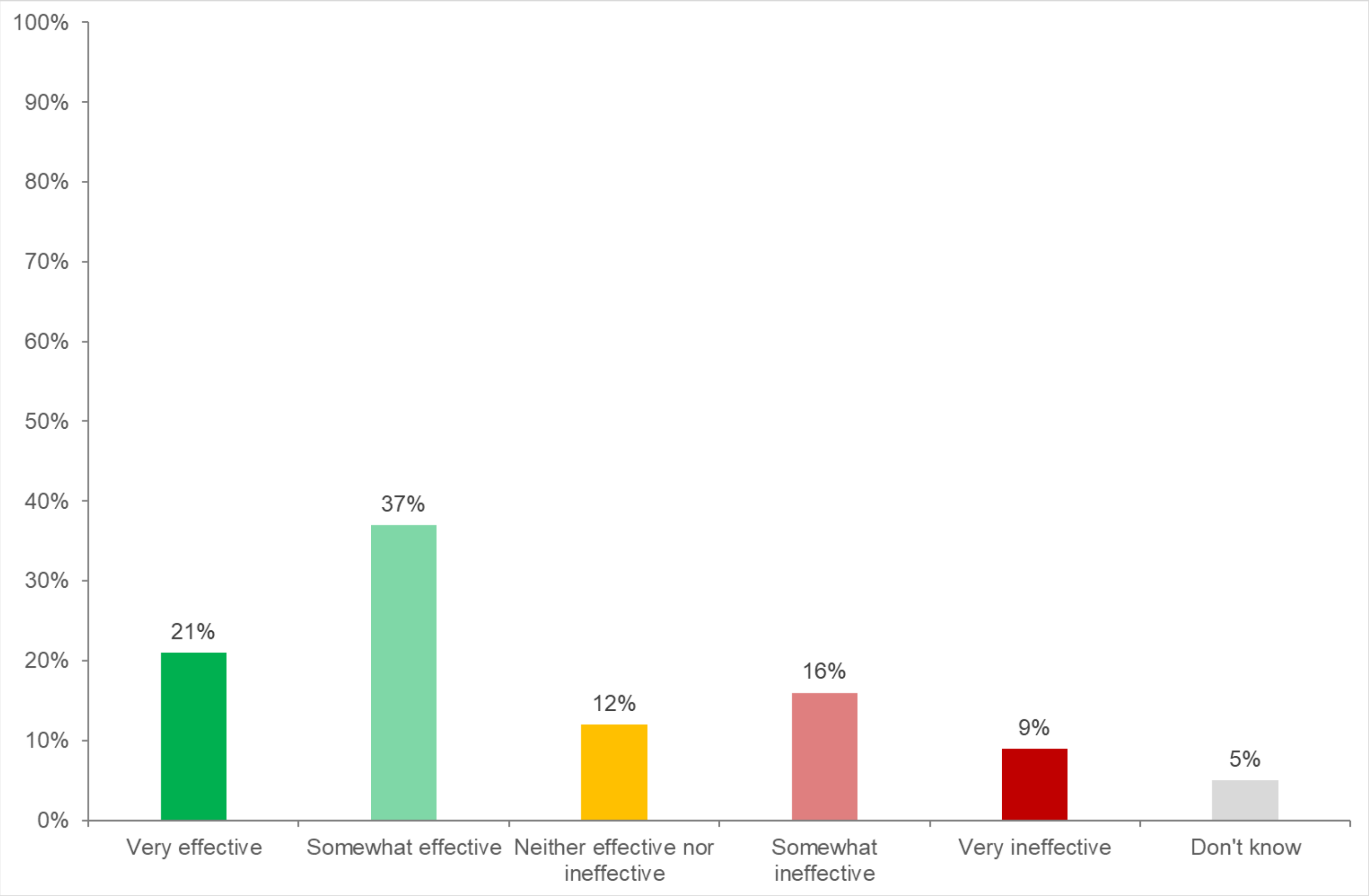
How effective is the current structure of councils and the approach to service delivery in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire?

Over half of respondents said the current structure and approach to service delivery in councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is effective with some variations by area

3.6. 58% of respondents said the current structure and approach to service delivery is at least somewhat effective, including 21% that said it is very effective. A quarter said it is at least somewhat ineffective, including 9% that said it is very ineffective.

3.7. Respondents that knew at least a reasonable amount about the current structure and approach to service delivery (63%) are more likely to say that the current system is effective compared to respondents with less awareness or knowledge (48%).

Figure 3.3: Effectiveness of the current structure and approach to service delivery



Number of respondents: 11,413.

3.8. Respondents in Rushcliffe (72% effective), Gedling (65% effective) and Broxtowe (63% effective) council areas have the highest ratings of effectiveness, while respondents in Nottingham City have the lowest (26% effective).

Figure 3.4: Effectiveness of the current structure and approach to service delivery by council area

	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark and Sherwood	Notting-ham	Rushcliffe
Very effective	14%	11%	24%	22%	10%	15%	5%	31%
Somewhat effective	40%	32%	39%	43%	34%	38%	21%	41%
Neither effective nor ineffective	14%	16%	13%	12%	17%	15%	15%	9%
Somewhat ineffective	16%	21%	12%	14%	20%	20%	33%	11%
Very ineffective	11%	14%	5%	7%	15%	8%	22%	5%
Don't know	4%	6%	6%	3%	5%	5%	5%	4%

3.9. Consequently, when the data is re-weighted by council area to be proportionate to population sizes across Nottinghamshire there is a change in the results with levels of effectiveness decreasing (as the locations with higher ratings of effectiveness have responded in greater numbers relative to their population size). The re-weighted data is more polarised with 47% of respondents rating the current system as effective and 34% ineffective:

- Very effective: 14%
- Somewhat effective: 33%
- Neither effective nor ineffective: 14%
- Somewhat ineffective: 21%
- Very ineffective: 13%
- Don’t know: 5%

3.10. Respondents that rated lower the effectiveness of the current system are:

- Aged under 25: 46% rate the current system as effective compared with 58% of older respondents.
- Private and social renters: 49% rate the current system as effective compared with 59% of owner-occupiers.

3.11. Respondents were asked to explain their answers to help understand the reasons behind their perceptions about effectiveness with 59% of respondents providing further explanation. In summary, those rating the system **effective** tend to highlight **service reliability, local knowledge and responsiveness, local representation, and a sense that the current system is fit for purpose.** Those who said **neither effective or ineffective** often expressed **mixed experiences, or uncertainty/lack of clarity.** Those rating the system **ineffective** emphasised **confusion, duplication, inefficiency, lack of joined-up/partnership working, political distrust, and inequity and inconsistency in services between different local councils**, with some advocating for change and unitary authorities.

3.12. The following provides more detail on the reasons alongside volume of opinion:

<u>Reasons for rating the current system as effective:</u>

- **Satisfaction with services** (cited by approximately 15% of respondents): Service provision is generally considered effective and satisfactory including key services such as bin collections, highways maintenance, and schools working well.
- **Local knowledge and responsiveness** (cited by approximately 10%)**:** Smaller/more localised councils such as District/Borough councils allow services to be tailored to local need and priorities, and be more aware of, and responsive to, issues as they emerge at the neighbourhood level.
- **Representation** (cited by approximately 5%)**:** Councils are closer to their communities and there is greater local accountability and political representation, reflecting local needs/priorities.
- **Familiarity, stability and continuity** (cited by approximately 2-3%): The current approach works sufficiently well and does not need to change, just potentially improved in-situ.

<u>Reasons for rating the current system as neither effective nor ineffective:</u>

- **Mixed experiences and views** (cited by approximately 5% of respondents): Some services/aspects work well and others could be improved. This includes an appreciation that there is scope for change and improvement, allied with concerns that change could be disruptive or not lead to positive benefits in practice.
- **Lack of knowledge, information or understanding of the current structure or approach to services** (cited by approximately 2-3%): This meant that respondents could not form a firm or clear opinion regarding effectiveness.

<u>Reasons for rating the current system as ineffective:</u>

- **Service delivery issues** (cited by approximately 10% of respondents): Mixed experiences of service delivery and quality, with scope for improvement.
- **Duplication and inefficiency** (cited by approximately 5%): The two-tier structure is inefficient with resource duplication between councils, unnecessary tiers of management and staffing resulting in wasted resources, added bureaucracy and negative consequences for service delivery/quality as well as cost-effectiveness.
- **Confusion** (cited by approximately 5%): The two-tier structure makes the system difficult to navigate, as well as creating a lack of accountability between councils.
- **Joined-up/partnership working** (cited by approximately 5%): The current two-tier system makes coordination challenging between councils and partners across the different tiers of local government, with scope to improve partnership working.

- **Political concerns** (cited by approximately 2-3%): Undercurrent of distrust of politics and politicians, surfacing mainly around planning decisions, fairness of service allocation, and perceptions of political agendas overriding residents' needs.
- **Inequity and lack of consistency** (cited by approximately 2-3%): Experiences of inconsistent services depending on location and challenges accessing services in neighbouring areas, as well as some concerns around a bias to service provision in urban areas compared to more rural areas.

Focus group insight:

Focus group participants shared similar views about the effectiveness of the current system to those expressed by respondents in the engagement survey, **driven by their personal experience of the councils and their services.** These views tended to be **dominated by perceived concerns about Nottingham City council's finances and services** and their impact on neighbouring areas. There was also reference to **inconsistent services, parochialism and calls for more joined-up and partnership working:**

> "It is confusing about who you should speak with about any given issue, the district council, the city council or the county council or all of them. I've learnt to know who does what and navigate the system, but I think there's scope for change." *Rural participant*

> "When you think about Nottingham City Council you can't say that the current approach works. There's been mismanagement, its financially bankrupt and my fear is that there will be a ripple effect on its neighbouring areas, especially if there is local government reorganisation. It's not a good advert for a unitary council or forming a new council with Nottingham City council at its head." *Urban participant*

> "I generally feel like my council does a reasonable job, but I've seen it professionally where I've been able to get services for one client from their council, but not for someone else who lives in a neighbouring council. It's a bit like a postcode lottery, so I'd like to see more consistency in service provision and it to be easier to access those services so that you don't have to speak to lots of different people." *Urban participant*

> "The day-to-day is fine, but I do question some of the decisions that are made. On one level it is nice to have a local council that feels close to the community, but some of the decisions feel a bit parochial, and possibly even overly self-interested, especially around planning decisions or pet projects of councillors. It feels a bit inward looking and I'd like to see the council be more innovative and outward facing, working closely with other councils and partners." *Rural participant*

One point focus group participants tended to share is that they felt it **important that their council is coherent geographically and focussed on their local community:**

> "One thing I like about the current system is that it feels like your council is working for you, is focussed on your area and your issues. Mansfield council is a good example, it is a fairly small council and is focussed on those that live in Mansfield and the surrounding areas." *Urban participant*

Section 4: Local Government Reorganisation in England

Introduction

4.1. This section presents findings about the Government's plans for reorganisation of local government across the country, including awareness and knowledge, and perceptions about these plans.

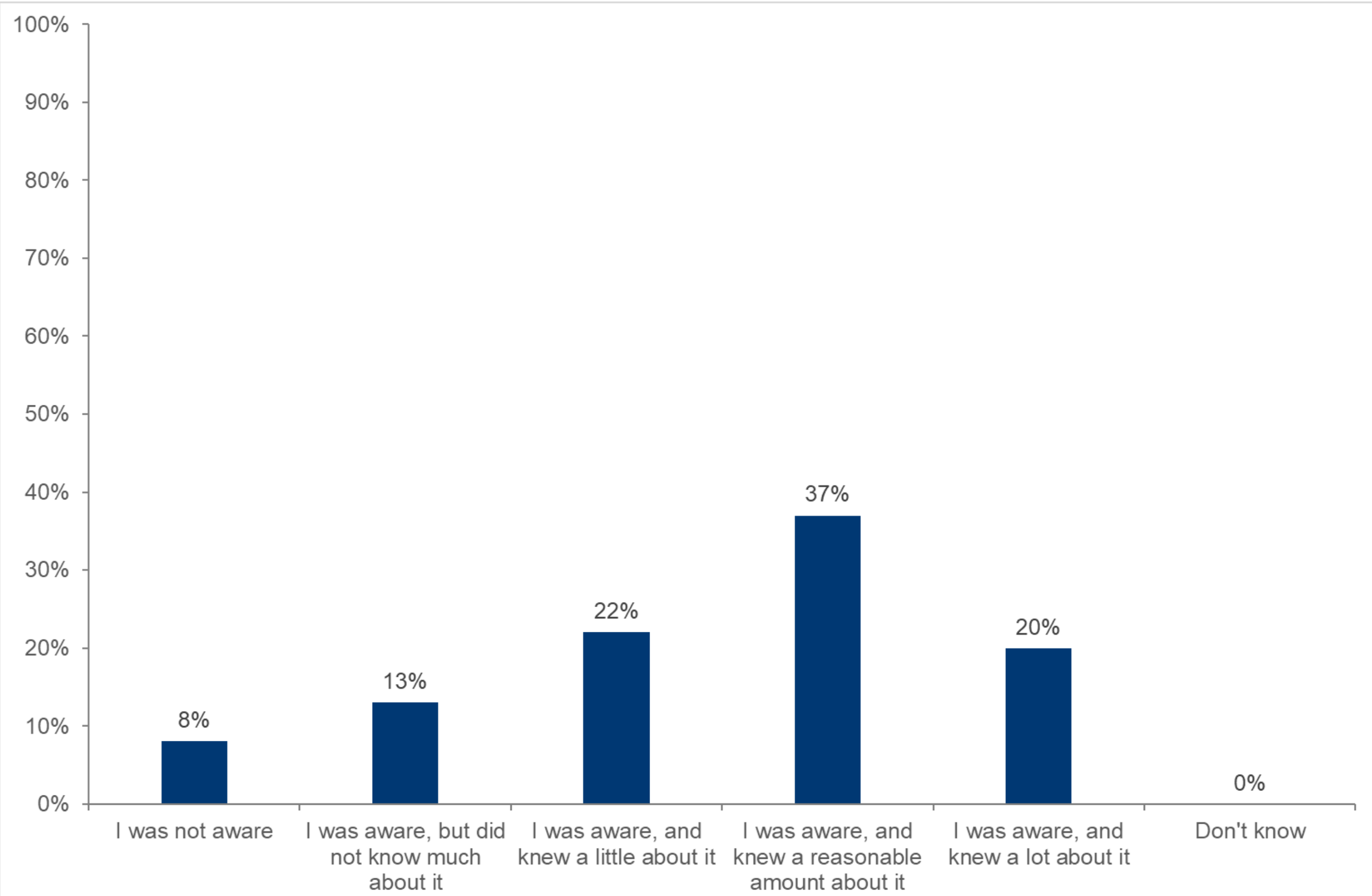
Before today, how aware were you about the Government's plans to reorganise local councils across England?

Most respondents are aware of the reorganisation of councils across England, including over half that have at least reasonable knowledge about it

4.2. 92% of respondents are aware of the reorganisation of councils across England, including 20% that knew a lot about it, 37% a reasonable amount, 22% a little and 13% not much about it. 8% were not aware at all before responding to the engagement survey.

4.3. There is a close relationship between awareness and knowledge of the current structure of councils and that of the reorganisation of councils across England. For example, 50% that were not aware of the current structure of councils are also not aware of the reorganisation of councils. Similarly, 54% that were aware and know a lot about the current structure of local councils are also equally aware and knowledgeable about the reorganisation of councils across England.

Figure 4.1: Awareness and knowledge of local government reorganisation across England



Number of respondents: 11,429.

Focus group insight:

The focus group participants had **mixed levels of awareness and knowledge about local government reorganisation in England**, with most awareness and knowledge generated through this engagement process and associated communications. Awareness and knowledge tended to be **greatest amongst participants in areas that are perhaps most affected by the proposals.** Prior awareness was also linked with the wider devolution agenda, including the formation of the East Midlands Combined County Authority:

> "I wasn't aware about any of this until you invited me to attend the focus group." *Urban participant*

> "I had some awareness, but only really vaguely. I'd seen something on social media about it." *Urban participant*

> "I'd heard of devolution and all that previously, but only really found out about local government reorganisation when I heard more about it from my council. Once I heard that we may be joining Nottingham I spent some time getting familiar with the issues as they directly affect me and my family." *Rural participant*

> "There was that consultation around the East Midlands regional authority a few years ago, so I was aware of what's going on in general, but I can't say I knew much about these specific plans until just recently." *Rural participant*

4.4. Respondents in Rushcliffe (96% aware including 64% with at least reasonable knowledge) and Gedling (96% aware including 62% with at least reasonable knowledge) are most aware and knowledgeable. Respondents in Bassetlaw are least aware and knowledgeable (78% aware including 37% with at least reasonable knowledge).

Figure 4.2: Awareness and knowledge of local government reorganisation across England by council area

	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark and Sherwood	Notting-ham	Rushcliffe
I was not aware	8%	22%	8%	4%	14%	9%	9%	4%
I was aware, but did not know much about it	15%	19%	15%	12%	13%	16%	14%	10%
I was aware, and knew a little about it	19%	21%	24%	22%	22%	21%	22%	22%
I was aware, and knew a reasonable amount about it	37%	25%	36%	40%	28%	34%	37%	42%
I was aware, and knew a lot about it	20%	12%	17%	22%	22%	21%	18%	22%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

4.5. There are some minor changes when the data is re-weighted by council area to be proportionate to population sizes across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- Not aware: 9%
- Not know much: 14%
- Know a little: 22%
- Know a reasonable amount: 35%
- Know a lot: 19%
- Don't know: 0%

4.6. Respondents with lower levels of awareness and knowledge of local government reorganisation across England are:

- Women: 51% know at least a reasonable amount compared with 62% of men.
- Aged under 25: 79% are aware compared with 92% of older respondents.
- Non-White British-Irish: 49% know at least a reasonable amount compared with 56% of other respondents.
- People living with a disability that affects their day-to-day activities a lot or a little: 49% know at least a reasonable amount compared with 57% of other respondents.
- Private renters and social renters: 49% of private renters and 39% of social renters know at least a reasonable amount compared with 57% of owner-occupiers.

What do you think are the main potential benefits, if any, of the Government's proposed reorganisation of local councils?

Potential benefits include efficiency and cost savings, geographic coherence, a simpler and clearer system and more joined-up working

4.7. Reduced duplication, efficiency and cost savings are the dominant perceived benefits, while scepticism/no benefits form the second largest cluster. Other themes like geographical coherence, simplification, joined-up working, improved services and fairness also stand-out, albeit in lesser numbers:

- **Efficiency and cost savings** (cited by approximately 35% of respondents): Respondents frequently highlighted the potential for reducing duplication, achieving greater efficiencies and consequently saving money by moving to larger unitary councils (although some also questioned whether these savings would be reinvested into local areas, public services or reduced council tax).
- **Geographic / administrative coherence** (cited by approximately 15%): Some respondents noted the opportunity to bring areas under a clearer, more consistent administrative structure, which reflects the way people live and move across the county, by bringing council areas together into larger bodies.
- **Simplification / clarity of councils and access to services** (cited by approximately 10%): These respondents consider benefits in having a single unitary council to contact, resulting in improved access to services, ease of navigation around the council system, and consequently also clearer accountability.
- **Better coordination, joined-up services and partnership working** (cited by approximately 10%): Some see value in larger councils promoting better coordination of services and joined-up decision making and working in areas managed by a single council. Relatedly, some also consider this could lead to better partnership working between the larger unitary councils and other public bodies.
- **Improved services and outcomes** (cited by approximately 5%): A smaller, albeit notable, proportion of respondents felt these changes would lead to improved service quality and delivery, and better social outcomes because of the above noted potential for efficiencies and joined-up decision-making and services, and partnership working, as well as scope for further investment in local areas and services due to cost savings.
- **Fairness and equitability** (cited by approximately 2-3%): A smaller group of respondents suggested that the proposals could lead to a fairer and more equitable system as a single, larger unitary council could result in more consistency around access to, and quality of, services and support. Relatedly, some also said it could result in a more considered and cohesive approach to tackling inequalities across a larger area.

4.8. However, approximately 20% of respondents were **sceptical about the proposals** for local government reorganisation stating they could see **no real benefits, expressing doubt or outright opposition.**

4.9. The findings are broadly **consistent across different areas and demographics**, albeit with slightly greater scepticism amongst respondents in Rushcliffe and Broxtowe council areas.

What concerns, if any, do you have about the Government's proposed reorganisation of local councils?

Respondents are concerned about urban-rural imbalance and the financial risks of local government reorganisation, as well as loss of local representation, accountability and knowledge

4.10. Urban–rural imbalance was the biggest single concern amongst respondents with costs/financial risks and loss of representation also consistently high mentions. These issues feed into concerns about service disruption and decline:

- **Geographic / urban–rural imbalance** (cited by approximately 35% of respondents): Strong concerns about Nottingham City in particular as the major urban centre in the county dominating rural locations in neighbouring council areas. This includes a concern that larger councils will not be able to tailor services to suit rural areas and that rural areas will receive inconsistent service provision or be deprioritised (loss of rural voice) compared to urban areas, as well as suffer from some of the challenges in urban areas and councils currently serving those areas. This view is heightened in areas surrounding Nottingham City, especially Broxtowe and Rushcliffe. Relatedly, some respondents suggested that Nottingham City could be a separate council in its own right to avoid some of these concerns and provide services specific to an urban area.
- **Financial risks** (cited by approximately 25%): Worries that reorganisation would be expensive and potentially not achieve the projected savings in the longer-term. Similarly, there are concerns that reorganisation could be used to bail out councils that are perceived to be struggling financially, especially Nottingham City, which in turn could lead to increased council tax and/or worse services in neighbouring areas.
- **Concerns over efficiency and complexity** (cited by approximately 10%): Related, there is scepticism that larger councils will be more efficient, simpler to navigate and improve access to services but rather in practice would add complexity and bureaucracy (and costs due to inefficiencies and waste).
- **Loss of local representation, accountability and knowledge** (cited by approximately 20%): Merging councils could increase the distance between decision-makers and communities, diluting residents' voices and reducing accountability and local connections. This could result in less responsive and tailored services to meet local needs and priorities, as well as a system and services that will be harder to navigate and access.
- **Service quality decline** (cited by approximately 15%): Linked to the above points, specific concerns that bigger councils would stretch services, reduce responsiveness, and worsen frontline delivery. Similarly, some respondents are concerned about the complexity of merging councils, which could lead to confusion and disruption, affecting service quality in the short-term.
- **Job losses / staffing concerns** (cited by approximately 5%): Relatedly, some respondents noted risks of redundancies, loss of experienced staff, and disruption to council workforces, in turn affecting services. This concern was shared between both residents and staff currently working in local councils with the latter explicitly concerned about their own jobs.

- **Politicisation** (cited by approximately 5%): A few respondents questioned whether these proposals are about political parties using reorganisation to consolidate power, or about democracy being weakened.
- **Preference for reform within existing structure** (cited by approximately 2-3%): As a result of the above concerns, some respondents said existing councils should be improved rather than replaced.
- **No need for change** (cited by approximately 2-3%): The system is not broken, so there is not a need to fix it, especially with risk that any changes could lead to less effective councils and services.

4.11. Approximately 5% of respondents said they did **not have any concerns about local government reorganisation and/or saw the risks as minimal.**

4.12. The findings are broadly **consistent across different areas and demographics**, albeit with greater concern amongst respondents in Rushcliffe and Broxtowe council areas especially related to Nottingham City and concerns around urban-rural imbalance and financial risks/costs.

Focus group insight:

Participants in the focus groups echoed the potential benefits and concerns around local government reorganisation, albeit with a **skew towards concerns over benefits.** Most participants could **appreciate the potential efficiencies and cost-savings, although they questioned whether in practice these would be achieved and moreover where they would be invested.** They also could see that there may be opportunities for more joined-up decision-making, working and services, although they also felt these could be **achieved within the current structure:**

> "It's all well and good saying there will be these savings and I can see on paper how they may think that's the case, but I'm not entirely convinced. I'd like to see the evidence and calculations because in my experience these things are a lot harder to achieve in practice." *Rural participant*

> "Cost-savings are fine, but how will they benefit me? Will I get a lower council tax? Will they be re-invested in services? Or will they just be a way of balancing the books and in effect we're just bailing out the government or failing councils?" *Rural participant*

> "I can see that there's room for improvement in the way things are currently. Services could be improved, there could be opportunities to work more strategically and regionally. I guess what I don't fully get is why this can't happen as things are now. Why do we have to rip up everything and start again. It's costly and time consuming to do that and it's not guaranteed to get results. It does feel a bit like a cost-cutting exercise dressed up." *Urban participant*

The two biggest concerns cited by focus group participants (mainly from rural areas) were around the **urban-rural imbalance and associated dominance of Nottingham City, and the loss of local representation and knowledge:**

> "The benefit of the current system is that you've got a council focussed on the needs of Nottingham City and another focussed on an area with a completely different set of issues and characteristics, a much more rural area. So you'd be losing that focus by creating larger councils and you risk creating councils that end up having different divisions in them, one to deal with rural issues and one to deal with urban issues because some of the challenges and priorities in these areas will be vastly different, so in the end you're not making any savings. Or what's more likely is that everything will be configured to suit the city because it will dominate any future larger council. It just feels like my voice and that of my community would be lost within the thousands more voices of those that live in the city." *Rural participant*

A few participants also questioned how **local government reorganisation fits with regional devolution and other public bodies and reforms:**

> "The whole agenda and governance in local government feels a bit muddled to me. They created the East Midlands regional council, which I felt like was adding an extra tier and now they're saying they want to reduce the tiers. Then you've also got things like the Police and Crime Commissioner who is meant to reflect local issues. You've got all these layers already, so they take some away and then add some more in, and in the end it's no more or less complex, confusing or cost-effective, and in the process you've incurred costs, time and disruption. It just feels messy and like an exercise in job creation and constant unnecessary change." *Urban participant*

Section 5: Future councils

Introduction

5.1. This section presents findings about the design of the potential future councils, including the most important principles and features of a new council and the best ways for the new councils to involve people in local decisions.

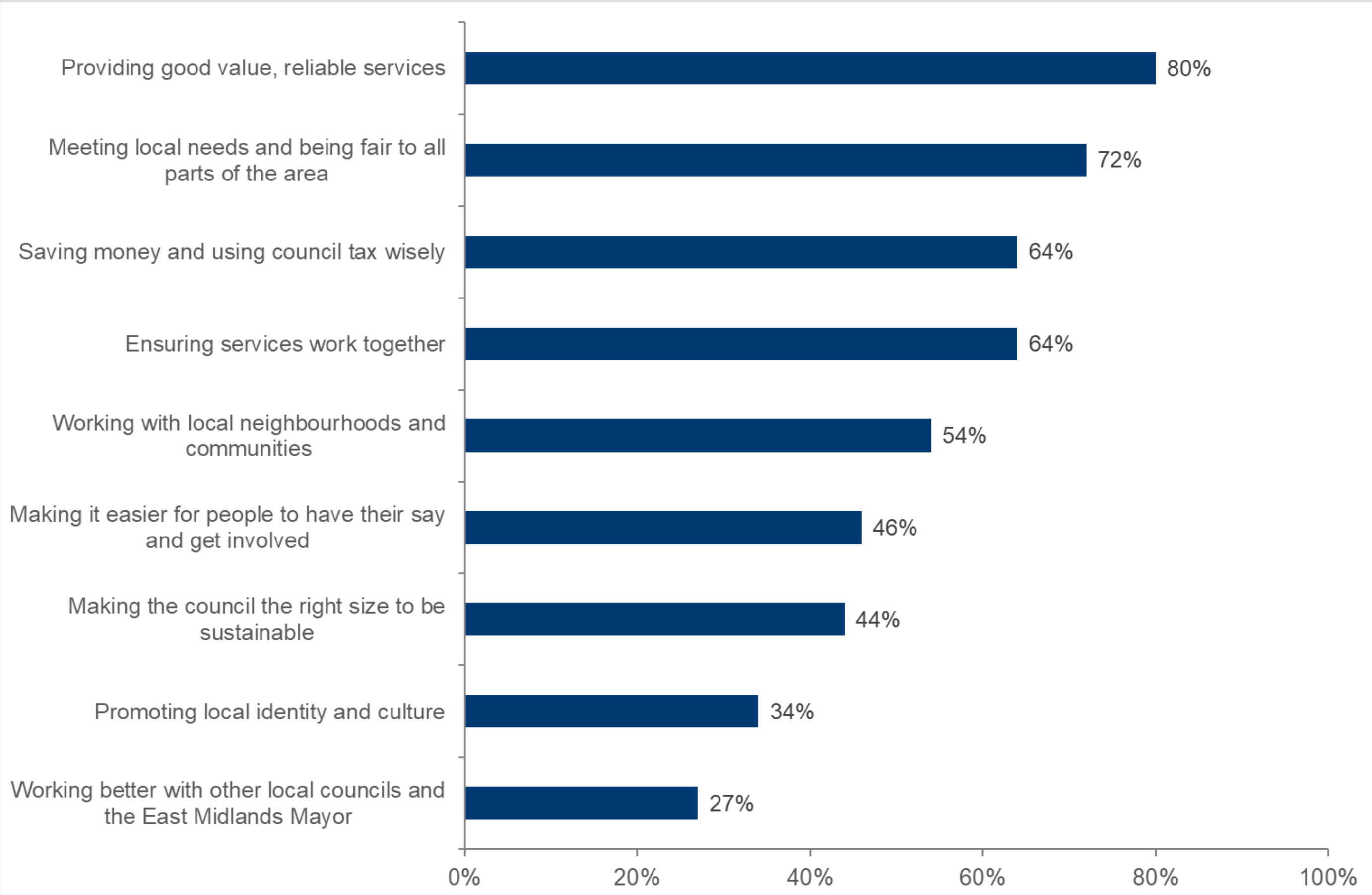
What should be most important when designing a new council?

Quality services, value for money and meeting local needs are the priorities for a future council

5.2. 80% of respondents cited providing good value, reliable services, following by 72% noting meeting local needs and being fair to all parts of the area.

5.3. 64% said saving money and using council tax wisely and the same proportion mentioned ensuring services work together, while 54% said working with local neighbourhoods and communities.

Figure 5.1: Most important for a new council



Number of respondents: 11,335.

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

5.4. In the ‘other’ responses, approximately 5% of respondents said that new councils should engage effectively and meaningfully with local residents, respond to local concerns and issues and consequently provide representation and accountability.

5.5. Whilst there are variations by council area (and also other demographics), these are not notable and the order is similar. Consequently, for succinctness, these are not presented in this report (although they are available in a separate document).

Focus group insight:

Discussions in the focus groups reflected the results in the engagement survey with an emphasis on **effective delivery of core services, value for money, competent management and meeting the needs of local residents**, including those in rural and urban areas**:**

> “Keep it simple really – good quality services, keep council tax low and manage the council and it services effectively.” *Urban participant*

> “The role of local councils, local government is to reflect the priorities of local people and meet their needs. Local councillors have an important role in this, as too does effective engagement with local people, communities and neighbourhoods. So any future council needs to preserve this approach, which I think is more difficult to do in a larger council.” *Urban participant*

> “I’m worried a larger council will be more detached from local people and local areas. How will they make sure that they understand and respond to the specific local concerns, especially of rural areas compared to somewhere like the city? That’s something they really need to bottom-out in a new council.” *Rural participant*

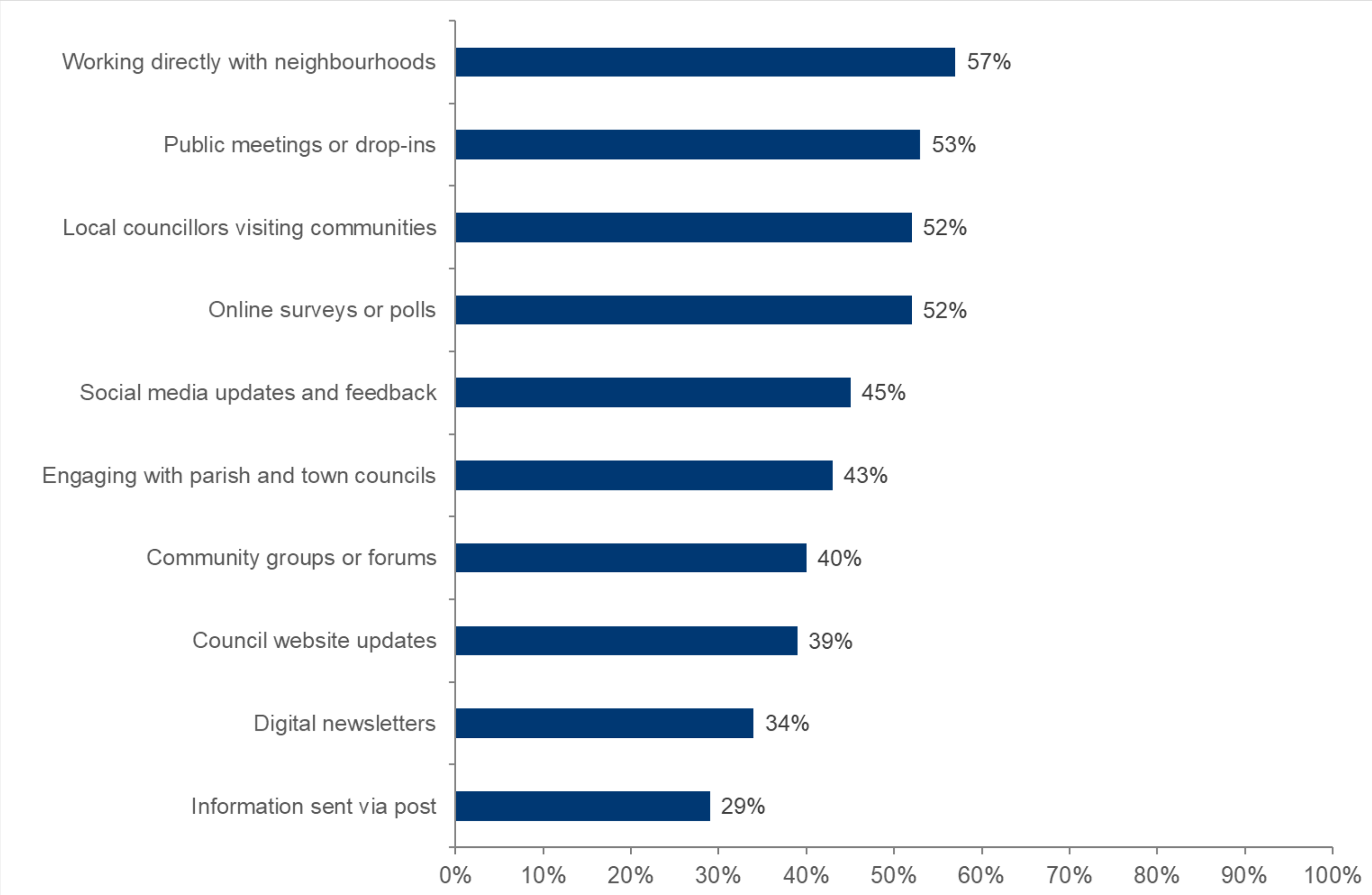
What are the best ways for the new councils to involve people in local decisions?

Neighbourhood working, direct resident engagement, and local councillors along with parish and town councils and community groups are the best way to involve people in local decisions

5.6. 57% of respondents said working directly with neighbourhoods, while several respondents mentioned engaging with local residents through public meetings (53%), online surveys (52%) and social media (45%).

5.7. 52% mentioned local councillors visiting communities, 43% said engaging with parish and town councils, and 40% mentioned community groups or forums.

Figure 5.2: Best ways to involve people in local decisions



Number of respondents: 11,262.

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

5.8. In the ‘other’ responses, approximately 2-3% of respondents highlighted the importance of engaging with local residents prior to decisions being made and avoiding decisions being ‘imposed’ on residents. Relatedly, some of these respondents raised concerns that their voices are not heard and will not make a difference. Similarly, some said they are concerned that new and larger councils will lead to less representation and undermine resident voices and democracy as there will be a greater distance between local people and issues, and their decision-makers.

5.9. Whilst there are variations by council area (and also other demographics), these are not notable and the order is similar. Consequently, for succinctness, these are not presented in this report (although they are available in a separate document).

Focus group insight:

Focus group participants said it is **important that local people are involved in decision-making**, both in principle and especially given the potential changes with concerns that larger councils may be more detached from local people and diverse local areas. They felt that **local councillors, parish councils, community groups and working closely in local neighbourhoods/communities** would be most important. They also wanted **engagement and consultation to be genuine and meaningful:**

> “It’s really important anyway, in principle, to involve local people, but even more so if these changes go ahead. I’ve engaged with my local councillor on a few things, so I’d be worried that the changes will take that away. Local councillors, if you get a good one, can be really important. And what is happening with the parish councils? They play an important role on the ground in rural areas like mine.” *Rural participant*

> “I don’t think it really matters how big the council is, they’re already quite big now covering lots of people and areas. It’s more about how well they know their communities and how well they respond to those issues. You want to see them getting involved at the grassroots level, out and about in their neighbourhoods and communities and delivering services at that more local level to meet specific needs. Council staff and councillors have a role in this, but so too do local community groups and charities because they know their areas and often work at a more individual or local level.” *Urban participant*

> “You can run as many surveys and focus groups as you want, but it’s not worth much if it doesn’t change things. I’m worried that this process is a done deal, that these changes we’re discussing will happen regardless of what we say. So my main point is that any involvement of local people needs to be done earnestly and with integrity.” *Urban participant*

Section 6: Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Introduction

6.1. This section presents the proposals for reorganisation of local government across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, including the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two councils and different options for the proposed new councils.

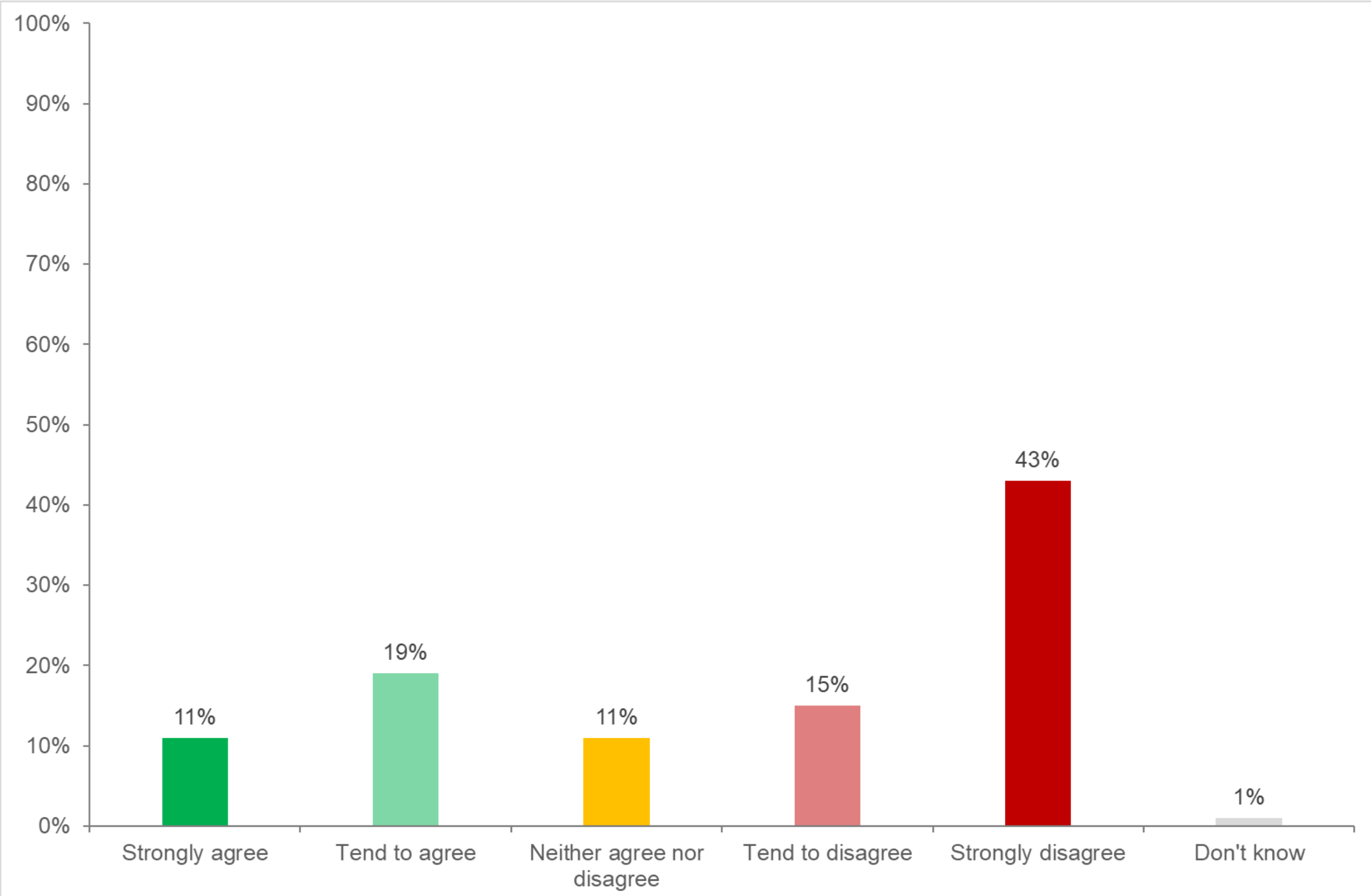
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two councils to run local government across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire area?

Over half disagree with the proposal to reduce the number of councils, with a relationship between perceived effectiveness of the current system and levels of agreement, as well as variations by area

6.2. 30% of respondents agree with the proposal, including 11% that strongly agree. In contrast, 58% of respondents disagree with the proposal, including 43% that strongly disagree.

6.3. There is a relationship between perceptions of the effectiveness of the current system and levels of agreement with the proposal. For example, 16% of those that said the current structure of local councils is effective agree with the proposal to reduce the number of councils compared with 60% of those that said the current system is ineffective. i.e. in other words, those that consider the current system ineffective are more likely to state there is a case for change.

Figure 6.1: Level of agreement with proposal to replace nine existing councils with two across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire



Number of respondents: 11,427.

6.4. Respondents in Nottingham City are more likely to agree with the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two (63% agree) than respondents in other areas. In contrast, respondents in Broxtowe (20% agree), Rushcliffe (22% agree) and Gedling (27% agree) council areas are less likely to agree.

Figure 6.2: Level of agreement with proposal to replace nine existing councils with two across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire by council area

	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark and Sherwood	Notting-ham	Rushcliffe
Strongly agree	11%	10%	7%	9%	14%	12%	31%	8%
Tend to agree	21%	21%	13%	18%	23%	24%	32%	14%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	18%	8%	11%	16%	17%	15%	7%
Tend to disagree	14%	21%	13%	15%	15%	17%	8%	15%
Strongly disagree	36%	28%	58%	46%	31%	28%	11%	55%
Don't know	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%

6.5. Consequently, when the data is re-weighted by council area to be proportionate to population sizes across Nottinghamshire there is a change in the results with levels of agreement increasing (as the locations with lower levels of agreement have responded in greater numbers relative to their population size). The re-weighted data is more polarised with 39% of respondents agreeing compared with 46% that disagree:

- Strongly agree: 16%
- Tend to agree: 23%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 14%
- Tend to disagree: 14%
- Strongly disagree: 32%
- Don't know: 2%

6.6. Respondents that are less likely to agree with the proposal to replace nine existing councils with two are:

- Women: 26% agree compared with 35% of women.
- Aged under 35: 37% agree compared with 30% of older respondents.
- People living with a disability that affects their lives a lot: 25% compared with 32% other respondents.

6.7. Respondents were asked to explain their answers to help understand the levels of agreement for the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire with 70% of respondents providing further explanation. Many of these comments reflect the benefits and concerns raised earlier about local government reorganisation in England in general. In summary, those that **agreed tended to state that the proposals would reduce duplication, generate efficiencies and consequently lead to cost-savings**, while a smaller number also said that it would lead to a **simplification of the system and therefore improved accessibility.**

6.8. Those that disagreed are **concerned about fairness and equitability, especially in relation to an urban-rural imbalance.** Similarly, they are concerned about a **loss of local representation, knowledge and accountability**, and associated issues around **access to services and responsiveness to local issues.** Some respondents **oppose local government reorganisation in general and in principle**, with concerns that implementation will be disruptive, and **improvements and savings will not be achieved in practice.** There is also some **distrust about the motives** behind the proposals and at a local level **concern that neighbouring areas will inherit the issues experienced by Nottingham City.**

6.9. The following provides more detail on the reasons alongside volume of opinion:

Reasons for agreement:

- **Efficiencies, streamlining and cost-savings** (cited by approximately 15% of respondents): Fewer councils would reduce duplication and bureaucracy with less waste and administrative layers resulting in cost-savings and potentially improved services.
- **Simplification of system and services** (cited by approximately 5%): Related to the above, a single layer/simplified structure and larger/fewer councils could be easier for residents to navigate and access services, as well as partners to engage with (resulting in more joined-up/partnership working, including between the two new councils).

Reasons for neutrality:

- **Balanced views** (cited by approximately 5% of respondents): Whilst there is an appreciation that changes may have a positive impact, there is also scepticism that these will be realised in practice. Similarly, some respondents said that the current system works satisfactorily and that change is not essential, even if it leads to improvements.
- **Lack of knowledge, information or understanding of the proposals or certainty about the outcomes** (cited by approximately 5%): This meant that respondents could not form a firm or clear opinion regarding agreement with the proposals or were uncertain in practice what the changes would entail and the potential benefits, as well as whether any benefits would be achieved in practice.

Reasons for disagreement:

- **Rural inequality and urban-rural divide** (cited by approximately 25% of respondents): Concern that larger councils will not be able to tailor services to suit rural areas and that rural and smaller areas will lose their voice and receive inconsistent or unfair service provision, resource allocation or be deprioritised compared to urban areas, as well as suffer from some of the challenges in urban areas and councils currently serving those areas. This view is heightened in areas surrounding Nottingham City where a relatively large urban area will be at the centre of the new council, and where some respondents in these areas do not want to take on the problems and challenges experienced by Nottingham City. Relatedly, some respondents suggested that Nottingham City could be a separate council in its own right to avoid some of these concerns and provide services specific to an urban area.
- **Loss of local representation, knowledge and accountability** (cited by approximately 20%): Concern that two councils would be more detached from local communities and not responsive to local issues, needs and priorities. This includes less access to councillors and decision-makers, loss of local identity and diminishing the ability of smaller communities to influence decision, with the concern heightened in more rural areas located away from urban centres.
- **Impact on services and outcomes** (cited by approximately 10%): Related to the above there is a concern that larger, potentially more centralised, councils will become more complex and difficult to navigate, as well as less in touch with local issues and priorities. Consequently, this will undermine access to service, negatively impact on quality and responsiveness of services and lead to reduced social outcomes, especially in rural areas away from the urban centres that may dominate the proposed new larger councils.
- **Concerns about implementation** (cited by approximately 5%): Scepticism that proposed benefits may not be realised and concern that disruption and confusion in making changes may outweigh benefits, at least in the short-term. This includes not realising the potential financial benefits and making it harder to navigate councils and access services.

- **Opposed to local government reorganisation in principle and specifically a two-council model (cited by approximately 5%):** Related to many of the above points, some respondents said they do not agree with local government reorganisation in principle. They either said that changes are not needed as the system is not broken, that improvements should be made to the existing councils in situ or that alternative approaches should be considered such as a whole county model and/or a Nottingham City specific model.
- **Distrust about motives** (cited by approximately 2-3%): A smaller proportion of respondents raised concerns that the proposals are about politicians and political parties seeking to strengthen their positions and power, and/or that it is about neighbouring councils and residents bailing out Nottingham City council for its perceived financial and delivery challenges.

Focus group insight:

Participants in the focus groups shared **similar viewpoints to those in the engagement survey and expressed earlier about Government's local government reorganisation across England.** The main points made were that a **two-council solution and associated larger councils would distance decision-makers from local issues and their communities**, including urban and rural areas, which in turn would lead to less responsive services. Consequently, they tended to feel that any potential efficiency, cost-saving and service improvement benefits would be undermined. This said, it is **worth noting that the concerns were mainly about larger councils not necessarily moving to a unitary model:**

> "Big isn't necessarily better. I think it's difficult enough already for councils to engage with their residents and really know the issues in each area, each neighbourhood. This is only going to be more difficult now if they're larger and more distanced from the people they're meant to serve, especially if they have lots of areas within their council that are different, from large cities to small towns and villages." *Rural participant*

> "I don't necessarily disagree with the idea of moving to a unitary model. The two-tier system is confusing, complex and bureaucratic. But I think two large councils may not be the answer, especially with one of them having Nottingham City at its heart. Big can sometimes mean that things are more cumbersome and more complex, which means it may make things worse. Have they considered any other solutions, like 3 or 4 councils? Or a city council on its own, with then a larger county one around it. That way at least you avoid the city being mixed in with villages and rural areas." *Urban participant*

Do you have any comments, concerns or suggestions about this option (Option 1b)?

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling (known as Option 1b). This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Rushcliffe. The second covering Gedling, Broxtowe, and Nottingham City.

There is concern that the proposed boundaries, especially around Nottingham City, are illogical or unfair, excluding some relevant areas close to the city while including outlining rural areas that do not have much in common with Nottingham City

6.10. Approximately half of respondents raised **concerns about the way the boundaries are drawn and the associated geography in the proposed new councils.** There is strong concern that the proposed boundaries are illogical or unfair with many respondents highlighting the exclusion of some neighbouring areas such as West Bridgford in Rushcliffe Borough Council and some areas close to the city in Ashfield District Council, which are seen as integral to Nottingham's urban area. At the same time, the **council covering Nottingham City is considered two large in scope, bringing in areas that do not align in terms of identity, characteristics, and access to services with the City**, while under-representing the city compared to its surrounding districts.

6.11. Relatedly, approximately 20% of respondents are critical of Nottingham City Council, which they perceive to be struggling financially. Consequently, they are **worried that neighbouring areas will be pulled into the city's problems and essentially 'bailing it out'.** In turn, they are concerned that they will have worse services and higher council tax. Respondents in Broxtowe and also some in Gedling particularly expressed these views. In contrast, some respondents that live in Nottingham were concerned that they may be forced to subsidise more rural areas.

6.12. Similarly, approximately 10% of respondents raised **concerns that rural areas in neighbouring councils will lose their voice within a council dominated by Nottingham City** (this is a particular concern of respondents living in Broxtowe). They said this could lead to less suitable services and/or loss of resources and services in rural areas, the new council not meeting the needs and priorities of rural areas, and rural areas subsidising the city.

6.13. Approximately 10% of respondents **explicitly supported the option, albeit conditionally.** This was often tied to an acceptance that local government has funding issues and that compromises are necessary if savings are to be made. That said, these respondents tended to say that they only support this option if in practice is leads to efficiencies and cost-reductions, as well as improved services and outcomes.

Focus group insight:

Focus group participants tended to have **negative views about Option 1b**, reflecting those in the engagement survey. Firstly, they were **concerned about Nottingham City dominating the new council** and the neighbouring areas being used to resolve its perceived financial issues, while receiving services that do not suit their local areas. The second reason related to the **exclusion of certain areas that neighbour the city**, such as West Brigford (and also Hucknall in Ashfield District Council area).

> "I'm against it. I feel like residents living in Broxtowe are going to have to pay for all the financial mismanagement of Nottingham City Council and subsidise the city and take on its problems. I don't see any benefits to anyone outside the city. Broxtowe is a very different area to the city, with different identity, heritage, character and issues. Are we now going to be treated the same way as those that live in Nottingham and receive the same types of services?" *Rural participant*

> "How did they draw up these boundaries. Why do they have Broxtowe and not say West Bridgford which is in Rushcliffe. There are definitely some places that are more like suburbs of Nottingham that you could argue for inclusion, but not some of the more rural areas in Broxtowe. Some of them are just a few miles away, but they feel a world away from the city." *Urban participant*

This said, some participants that **live in Gedling Borough Council area were more agnostic about the option, given their proximity and relationship to Nottingham:**

> "I'm fairly relaxed about it to be honest. I do feel like I live in a suburb of Nottingham – that's where I tell people I'm from. I work in Nottingham and we socialise and recreate in Nottingham. I appreciate some of the concerns around finances and management, but changes can be made to improve that. If this is all going ahead, then I can see the benefits of being part of a larger city council than with say the rest of Nottinghamshire that I have a bit less to do with." *Urban participant*

Participants living in other parts of Nottinghamshire had less to say about this option (or all the options) because they would not be in a council with Nottingham City. However, there were **concerns about being in a large council covering such a large area:**

> "On one level it doesn't really affect me that much, I'd be more worried if I was in one of the areas proposed for inclusion with Nottingham City. But on another level, this option geographically just doesn't sit well with me. The county-wide council is just so large. I live at the top of it and I'm wondering what I've got in common with areas and communities right at the bottom of it in Rushcliffe. It just feels like there should be three or four councils, not just two – it all fills a bit simplistic, which makes you worry about the thinking and evidence behind it all." *Rural participant*

Do you have any comments, concerns or suggestions about this option (Option 1e)?

This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Gedling. The second covering Broxtowe, Nottingham City, and Rushcliffe.

Whilst there is more positivity towards this option, notable concerns remain including around the proposed boundaries and inclusion or exclusion of certain areas

6.14. There is **more positivity/support towards this option compared to 1b** with approximately a third of respondents supporting it or at least state that it is the best of two options. This in part is because some respondents say it **makes more sense geographically and/or is a cleaner North-South split** with a better division of populations and resources. Nottingham City respondents are most supportive, although question marks remain about the boundaries not being wholly logical and linked to the urban-suburban connections between the city and areas in its immediate vicinity and the way local residents live and connect with the city. Respondents living in Gedling are also more supportive about option 1e compared to 1b, although some that live closer to the city felt that it is more appropriate that they are part of a city/south council rather than one orientated towards the north.

6.15. This said, many respondents re-assert concerns about the option **joining outlying rural and other areas to the city that have little to no relationship with it, while excluding other areas** that are much closer geographically and more connected to the city (cited by approximately 25% of respondents). These concerns were particularly made by respondents living in Broxtowe and Rushcliffe Council areas.

6.16. Similarly, **concerns about bailing out Nottingham City Council** and inheriting its issues (cited by approximately 20% of respondents) and **rural-urban differences and associated concerns** (cited by approximately 20%) in relation to the city continued to be noted with this option, especially amongst respondents living in Broxtowe and Rushcliffe Council areas that are worried about being ‘over-shadowed’ or their voice lost with local identity, decision-making and priorities absorbed into the urban and city areas. Some respondents from Broxtowe and Rushcliffe Council areas said that if such an option were to go ahead those councils should take over the running of the new council.

6.17. Approximately 10% of respondents **outright oppose the option**, often citing issues raised earlier about local government reorganisation in general. Some of these respondents also **request more information and question the evidence base**, including around identifying the options and the practical reality of the potential benefits and savings.

6.18. Across both options, some respondents **suggested alternatives** including a one county option, a two-council option involving the city and immediate surrounding areas (but not to the current extent of proposed options) and then a wider county council, or a three-council solution – one in the north, one in the south and then one based around the city and its immediate vicinity.

Focus group insight:

Much of the discussion in the focus groups about Option 1e **reiterated points made about Option 1b, and the results of the engagement survey.** Participants said that whilst they felt **Option 1e was more logical, they also questioned the exclusion of some neighbouring areas to the north of the city and the inclusion of areas at the bottom** of Rushcliffe Borough Council in the option involving the city.

> "On the face of it this seems like a more logical and fair option, a more natural split between the north and the south of the county." *Urban participant*

> "This options resolves some of the issues we discussed about the other option like including West Bridgford, but you've now got an option that excludes some areas in Gedling Borough that are on the doorstep of Nottingham and instead includes some areas that are miles away from the city in really rural areas. I don't see how this can work as a coherent council." *Urban participant*

> "I live right at the bottom of Rushcliffe Borough in a small village. It's as rural as you can get. I try to avoid going into Nottingham and if I do, it's only to the outskirts. I have very little to do with it. So it feels strange that I'd then be in a council with Nottingham at its centre. I can't see how that would benefit me or my area in any way." *Rural participant*

Do you have any comments, concerns or suggestions about the development of this option (Nottingham City specific option)?

Nottingham City Council boundary review option that could include parts of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe, and Gedling as one of the unitary councils. The second council would cover the rest of Nottinghamshire – **only asked to respondents that live or work in Nottingham City.**

This is considered a sensible and logical solution by *Nottingham City respondents*, although concerns remain around fairness, urban-rural imbalance and that this may not resolve perceived deep-seated financial and service issues, while in practice it may be difficult to identify appropriate boundaries

6.19. This approach was often described as the **"most sensible and logical" solution** (cited by approximately half of respondents to this question) by Nottingham City respondents. Respondents that supported it said it is fairer with suburban residents who use city services paying city council tax and having voting rights, essentially creating a **better alignment between service use, taxation, and representation.** Some respondents also perceived it as potentially a **less disruptive and preferable alternative to wider structural reorganisation.** There was also support for the **concept of a city-specific solution and relatedly a strong city at the heart of the county.**

6.20. However, **concerns remain about fairness of boundaries and urban-rural divides**, potentially dragging rural areas into an urban focussed council and an urban area having to deliver and potentially subsidise services to a rural area (cited by approximately 20%). There is also **scepticism as to whether a larger council with new boundaries will solve financial pressures and service delivery issues** with some believing these are deep-seated and underlying in nature (cited by approximately 15%).

6.21. There are also **concerns and debate about the drawing up of new boundaries** – their appropriateness and the areas that would be included/excluded, which is not considered clear-cut or straight-forward (cited by approximately 10%). Relatedly, some respondents said that there is a **risk of disruption or disputes over boundaries, with concern that some of this could be politically motivated** (cited by approximately 5%).

6.22. Some respondents said that a boundary review, whilst potentially sensible, could be **more challenging to deliver as it involved breaking-up existing local councils**, which could undermine some of the potential cost-savings and service improvements (cited by approximately 5%). Similarly, a few respondents said that **existing council boundaries reflected local community connections, heritage and identity and breaking-up these council areas could be divisive**, especially if the boundaries are not identified appropriately (cited by approximately 5%). This was **especially cited in the case of West Bridgford, which is considered linked to the city but also an integral part of the Rushcliffe Borough Council area** and therefore risked undermining ties between the town and neighbouring villages and leaving the rest of the council area 'adrift' (cited by approximately 15%).

Appendices

Appendix 1: Engagement survey

Note: This is an export from an online version of the survey.

Give your views on the future of Local Government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Introduction

The way local councils in England are organised is being fundamentally changed for the first time in 50 years.

All nine local councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are working together to gather views on how local government should work in the future. This includes the city, county, and all district and borough councils. The survey is open to everyone who lives, works, or has an interest in the area. Your feedback will help shape proposals that reflect the needs and priorities of local communities.

The changes being considered are significant. If approved, all nine existing councils would be abolished and replaced with two new, larger councils. These new councils would each be responsible for delivering all local services in their area, bringing everything from housing and social care to waste collection and road maintenance under one organisation.

This would be a major shift from the current system, where responsibilities are split between different councils. The aim is to make services more joined-up, easier to access, and more responsive to local needs. It could also reduce duplication and overheads, helping to save money and make local government more efficient.

The feedback from this survey will help shape the final proposals, which must be submitted to Government by November 2025. The Government will then decide how and when the new arrangements will be introduced.

This questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to complete. **Please complete it by Sunday 14 September 2025.**

The survey is being conducted with support from Public Perspectives, an independent organisation that works with local councils and communities.

Your personal details are managed securely and within data protection laws. Your responses are anonymous and confidential. This means that we will not report your answers alongside your personal details in such a way that you can be identified. Each of the partner council privacy notices will apply and anonymised data will be shared between councils. Please visit the following to read Public Perspectives' privacy notice:

www.publicperspectives.co.uk/data-security-and-privacy/

Information in a different format:
If you need help or support to respond to this questionnaire, or would like it in an alternative format (large print, British Sign Language etc.) or language, please contact Public Perspectives via e-mail on: Nottinghamshire@publicperspectives.co.uk or Freephone: 0800 533 5386 (please leave a message and we will call you back).

Please read the background information before responding: Read background information

Click 'Next' below to begin responding to the questionnaire.

Living, working and studying in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Q1a.Are you responding as . . .?

Please select all relevant answers. These questions help us understand who is responding to the survey.

- ❑ A resident living in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire
- ❑ Someone who works in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire
- ❑ A voluntary or community organisation
- ❑ A Town or Parish Council
- ❑ A District / Borough / City / County Council employee
- ❑ Another public sector organisation
- ❑ A local councillor
- ❑ A business owner or business leader operating in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire
- ❑ Other

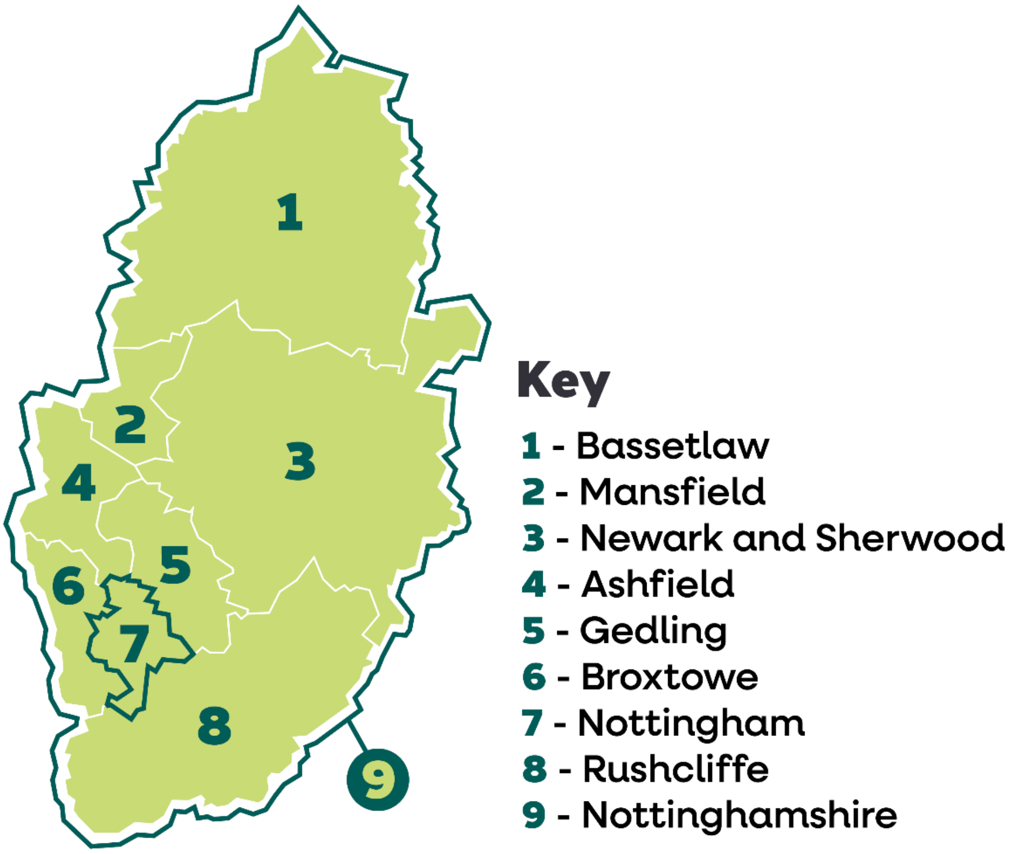
If 'Other', please state:

____

Please state the name of the organisation or business you represent:

____

To help you answer the following questions, this map shows the boundaries of the local councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:



Q1b. Which council area does your organisation mainly operate in?

Please select all relevant answers.

- ❑Ashfield District Council area
- ❑Bassetlaw District Council area
- ❑Broxtowe Borough Council area
- ❑Gedling Borough Council area
- ❑Mansfield District Council area
- ❑Newark and Sherwood District Council area
- ❑Nottingham City Council area
- ❑Nottinghamshire County Council area
- ❑Rushcliffe Borough Council area
- ❑Across all of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
- ❑Outside of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
- ❑Don't know

Q2a. Which council area do you live in?

If you are uncertain which council covers your area, visit the following website and enter your postcode: **www.gov.uk/find-local-council**

Please select one answer only.

- ❑ Ashfield District Council area
- ❑ Bassetlaw District Council area
- ❑ Broxtowe Borough Council area
- ❑ Gedling Borough Council area
- ❑ Mansfield District Council area
- ❑ Newark and Sherwood District Council area
- ❑ Nottingham City Council area
- ❑ Rushcliffe Borough Council area
- ❑ Outside of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
- ❑ Don't know

Q2b. What is your postcode? (This is asked so we can analyse the results by different areas. We will not be able to identify you personally)

____

Q3. Where is your main place of work or study?

Please select all relevant answers.

- ❑ Ashfield District Council area
- ❑ Bassetlaw District Council area
- ❑ Broxtowe Borough Council area
- ❑ Gedling Borough Council area
- ❑ Mansfield District Council area
- ❑ Newark and Sherwood District Council area
- ❑ Nottingham City Council area
- ❑ Nottinghamshire County Council area
- ❑ Rushcliffe Borough Council area
- ❑ Across all of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
- ❑ Outside of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
- ❑ Don't know
- ❑ Not applicable - not currently in work / education

If 'Outside of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire', where is your main place of work or study?

____

Your local area

Q3a. How do you describe where you're from when talking to someone who doesn't live nearby? Which names or places do you mention?

Please list below:

____

____

____

____

____

____

Q3b. To what extent do you agree or disagree that you are proud to live in your local area?

Please select one answer only.

- ❑Strongly agree
- ❑Tend to agree
- ❑Neither agree nor disagree
- ❑Tend to disagree
- ❑Strongly disagree
- ❑Don't know

Q3c. Thinking generally, what would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live?

Please select all relevant answers.

- ❑Arts and cultural services such as theatres and museums
- ❑Activities and facilities for children and young people
- ❑Community events and activities and supporting local community groups
- ❑Decent and affordable homes
- ❑Health services such as mental health services and promoting healthy lifestyles
- ❑Jobs and supporting people into work
- ❑Keeping the streets and public areas clean and tidy
- ❑Maintaining roads and pavements
- ❑Parks, sports and leisure facilities
- ❑Public transport, roads and parking
- ❑Refuse collection and recycling
- ❑Regeneration of town centres / high streets, including shops and markets
- ❑Schools and places of learning
- ❑Support and services for older people and vulnerable groups
- ❑Supporting residents to reduce their impact on the environment
- ❑Tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing crime
- ❑Other
- ❑Don't know

If 'Other', please state:

____

Q3d. And what are your priorities for improvement in the local area?

Please select all relevant answers.

- ❑ Arts and cultural services such as theatres and museums
- ❑ Activities and facilities for children and young people
- ❑ Community events and activities and supporting local community groups
- ❑ Decent and affordable homes
- ❑ Health services such as mental health services and promoting healthy lifestyles
- ❑ Jobs and supporting people into work
- ❑ Keeping the streets and public areas clean and tidy
- ❑ Maintaining roads and pavements
- ❑ Parks, sports and leisure facilities
- ❑ Public transport, roads and parking
- ❑ Refuse collection and recycling
- ❑ Regeneration of town centres / high streets, including shops and markets
- ❑ Schools and places of learning
- ❑ Support and services for older people and vulnerable groups
- ❑ Supporting residents to reduce their impact on the environment
- ❑ Tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing crime
- ❑ Nothing
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Don't know

If 'Other', please state:

____

The current way councils are organised in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Currently, council services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are delivered differently, depending on where you live.

In Nottinghamshire, local services are currently delivered under what is known as a 'two-tier' council structure. For example, your local borough or district council will collect your waste, but the county council will dispose of it. You will also be represented by two sets of councillors, borough or district councillors and county councillors.

Nottinghamshire County Council oversees county-wide services such as social care, education, and road maintenance. While several district and borough councils are responsible for services, including waste collection, housing and leisure centres.

Nottingham City Council operates as a 'unitary authority', meaning it provides all council services within the city of Nottingham.

In total, nine different councils provide services across the county (not including town and parish councils and these councils are not included in the reorganisation).

Q4. Before today, how aware were you of the current structure of councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and the services each council provides?

Please select one answer only.

- ❑ I was not aware
- ❑ I was aware, but did not know much about it
- ❑ I was aware, and knew a little about it
- ❑ I was aware, and knew a reasonable amount about it
- ❑ I was aware, and knew a lot about it
- ❑ Don't know

Q5. How effective is the current structure of councils and the approach to service delivery in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire?

Please select one answer only.

- ❑ Very effective
- ❑ Somewhat effective
- ❑ Neither effective nor ineffective
- ❑ Somewhat ineffective
- ❑ Very ineffective
- ❑ Don't know

Why have you answered in this way?

Local Government Reorganisation

For the first time in 50 years the way local councils are set up in parts of England is being reviewed and modernised. In areas like Nottinghamshire, where there are currently two layers of local government (such as county and district councils), the Government is encouraging a move to a simpler system.

This change, called Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), would replace the current two-tier structure with a single council, known as a unitary authority. Instead of having separate councils responsible for different services, one council would take care of everything from roads and rubbish collection to housing and social care.

The goal is to bring services that are currently split across different councils into one place, with the aim of making them easier to access and more joined-up for residents. It also means fewer councils overall, which could lead to savings by cutting duplication and reducing overheads.

Local councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have been asked to work together on proposals for how this new system could work best in their area. These proposals, which will include evidence and public feedback, need to be submitted by November 2025. The Government will then decide on the final arrangements.

Q6. Before today, how aware were you about the Government's plans to reorganise local councils across England?

Please select one answer only.

- ❑ I was not aware
- ❑ I was aware, but did not know much about it
- ❑ I was aware, and knew a little about it
- ❑ I was aware, and knew a reasonable amount about it
- ❑ I was aware, and knew a lot about it
- ❑ Don't know

Q7. What do you think are the main potential benefits, if any, of the Government's proposed reorganisation of local councils?

Please make comments below:

Q8. What concerns, if any, do you have about the Government's proposed reorganisation of local councils?

Please make comments below:

____
____
____
____
____
____

Future councils

Q9. What should be most important when designing a new council?

Please select all relevant answers.

- ❑ Ensuring services work together
- ❑ Making the council the right size to be sustainable
- ❑ Providing good value, reliable services
- ❑ Saving money and using council tax wisely
- ❑ Working better with other local councils and the East Midlands Mayor
- ❑ Making it easier for people to have their say and get involved
- ❑ Working with local neighbourhoods and communities
- ❑ Meeting local needs and being fair to all parts of the area
- ❑ Promoting local identity and culture
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Don't know

If 'Other', please state:

____

Q10. What are the best ways for the new councils to involve people in local decisions?

Please select all relevant answers.

- ❑ Working directly with neighbourhoods
- ❑ Public meetings or drop-ins
- ❑ Online surveys or polls
- ❑ Local councillors visiting communities
- ❑ Community groups or forums
- ❑ Social media updates and feedback
- ❑ Council website updates
- ❑ Digital newsletters
- ❑ Information sent via post
- ❑ Engaging with parish and town councils
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Don't know

If 'Other', please state:

____

Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

All councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have been working together on a proposal to restructure how local government services are delivered in the area. An initial proposal was submitted to the Government in March 2025.

Since then, further work has been carried out to explore options in greater detail and gather supporting evidence. In line with government guidance to use existing district areas as the basis for reorganisation, two core options are being proposed. No final decision has been made by all councils on a single option, and some councils could still explore additional proposals alongside the two core options currently being proposed.

Under these proposals, the nine existing councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire would be replaced by two new unitary councils. Each new council would be responsible for delivering all local government services in its area.

You can see a map showing the geography of the two proposals later in this questionnaire.

Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two councils to run local government across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire area?

Please select one answer only.

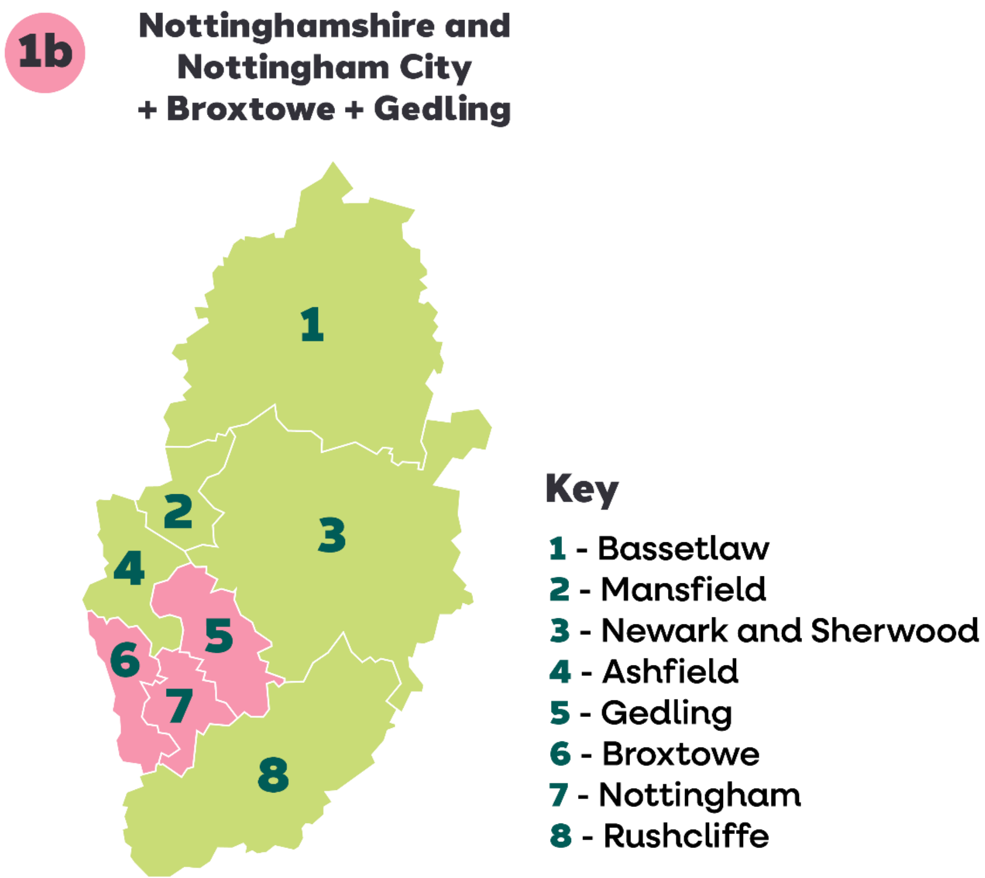
- ❑ Strongly agree
- ❑ Tend to agree
- ❑ Neither agree nor disagree
- ❑ Tend to disagree
- ❑ Strongly disagree
- ❑ Don't know

Why have you answered in this way?

The core options

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling (known as Option 1b)

This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Rushcliffe. The second covering Gedling, Broxtowe, and Nottingham City.

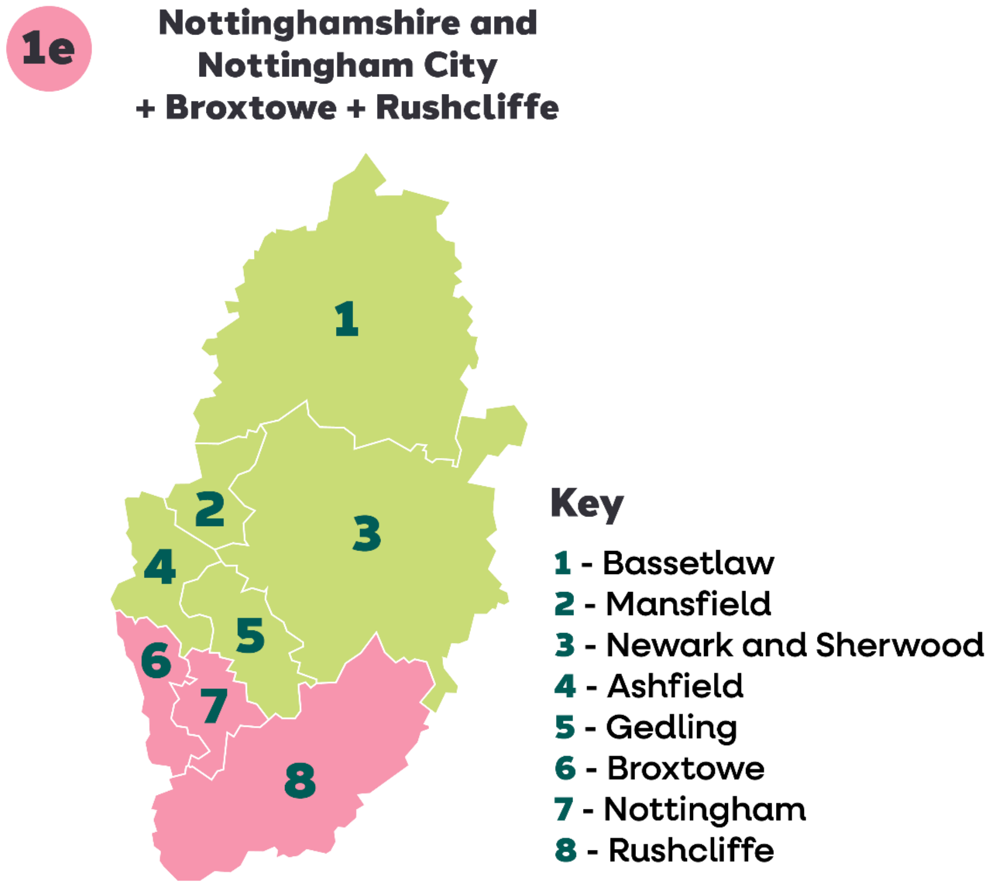


Q12. Do you have any comments, concerns or suggestions about this option?

Please make comments below:

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe (known as Option 1e)

This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Gedling. The second covering Broxtowe, Nottingham City, and Rushcliffe.



Q13. Do you have any comments, concerns or suggestions about this option?

Please make comments below:

Nottingham City Council boundary review option

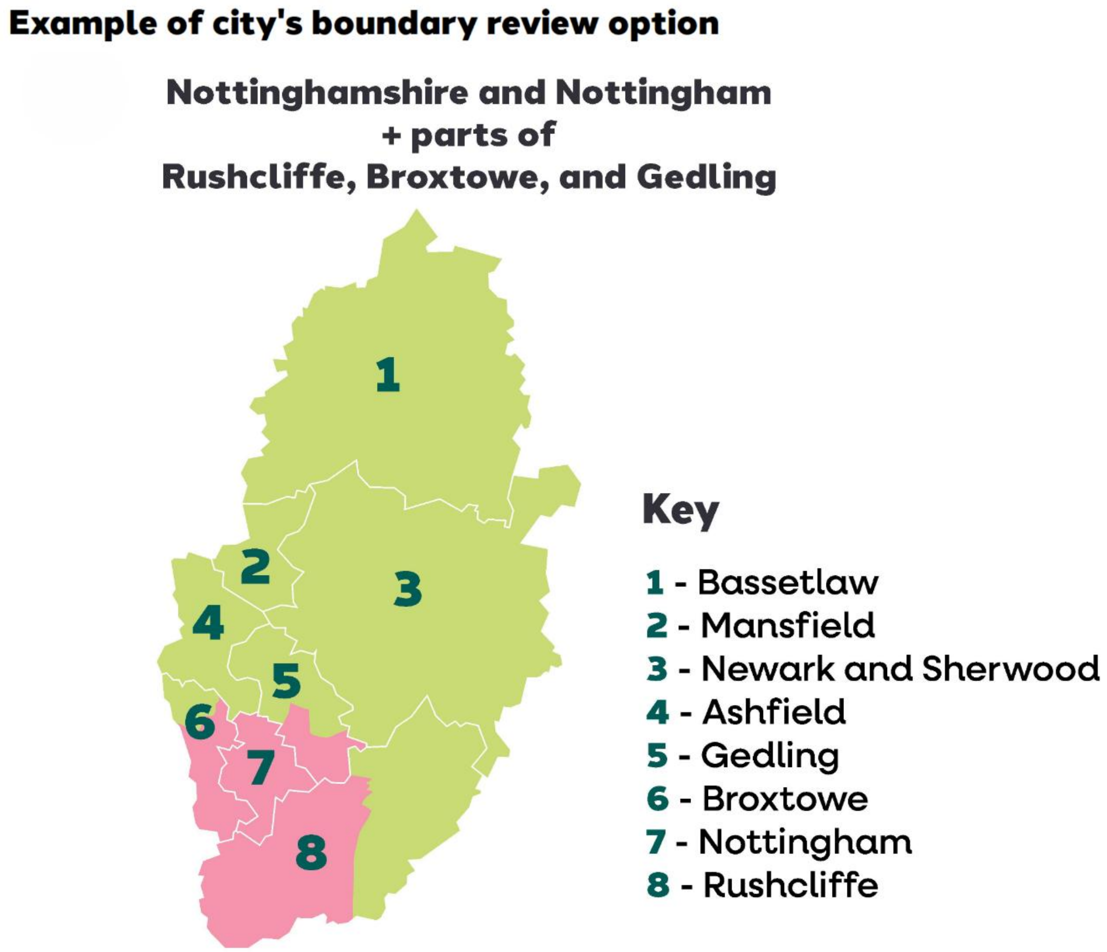
This option is being presented to anyone living or working in the Nottingham City Council area.

The Government has suggested that there may be an opportunity for a boundary review, where strong justification exists. A boundary review looks at the current local council boundaries, the communities within them and the services they access to see if they work well or whether new boundaries may work better. A boundary review could allow councils to look at options outside of their existing boundaries.

Nottingham City Council is currently exploring a boundary review option that may include parts of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe, and Gedling as one of the unitary councils. The second council would cover the rest of Nottinghamshire.

The rationale is that while the official population of Nottingham is 328,000, the built-up area of the city is much greater, and there are people who live in the suburbs, work in the city, and use Nottingham City services, but who can't vote in city elections and don't contribute to city council tax because of the current council boundaries.

A map is included below to indicate what this could look like, however Nottingham City Council would like to understand people's views in order to develop the option further.



Q13a. Do you have any comments, concerns or suggestions about the development of this option?

Please make comments below:

Other comments

Q14. Do you have any other comments, concerns or suggestions about the proposals for the reorganisation of local government across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire?

Please make comments below:

Q15. How did you hear about this survey?

Please select all relevant answers.

- ❑Council website
- ❑Council e-mail or newsletter
- ❑Other council communication or event
- ❑Council social media
- ❑Other social media
- ❑Via a local councillor
- ❑Via a local organisation
- ❑Poster or flyer
- ❑Direct e-mail or letter
- ❑An advert in a local newspaper
- ❑A relative or a friend
- ❑Other
- ❑Don't know

If 'Other', please state:

About you

We would like to ask you some questions about yourself and your household. This will help councils understand the opinions and impact of the proposals on different groups of people that live or work in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Please be assured that your answers are confidential and will be treated anonymously. This means that we will not report your answers alongside your personal details in such a way that you can be identified. All your answers and personal information will be managed securely and in accordance with data protection laws.

This information is **optional**. If you do not wish to complete this section, you can skip these questions and then submit your responses.

Q16. Are you . . .?

Please select one answer only.

❑Female
❑Male
❑Another term
❑Prefer not to say

Q17. What is your age group?

Please select one answer only.

❑Under 18
❑18-24
❑25-34
❑35-44
❑45-54
❑55-64
❑65 and over
❑Prefer not to say

Q18. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

Please select one answer only.

❑Yes, which reduce my ability to carry out my day-to-day activities a lot
❑Yes, which reduce my ability to carry out my day-to-day activities a little
❑Yes, but they don’t reduce my ability to carry out my day-to-day activities at all
❑No
❑Prefer not to say

Q19. Which of the following best describes your ethnic group or background?

Please select one answer only.

❑White British or Irish
❑Central or Eastern European
❑Other White background
❑Asian or Asian British
❑Black, Black British, Caribbean or African
❑Mixed background
❑Other ethnic group
❑Prefer not to say

Q20. Which of the following best describes your current housing situation?

Please select one answer only.
❑Owner-occupier
❑Privately renting
❑Renting from the council or housing association
❑Other
❑Prefer not to say

Next steps

You're nearly finished – thank you for taking part so far.

Before you submit your response, please take a moment to read the information below about what happens next.

Following the close of the survey on Sunday 14 September 2025, we will be collating and analysing all of the responses received from across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to understand the views of everyone who has taken part.

The views of people shared in this survey will feed into the development of final proposals, which must be submitted to government by 28 November 2025. Your local council will keep you updated as things progress.

Click 'Submit' below to send us your responses.

Once submitted, you will be redirected to the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Government Reorganisation website.

Appendix 2: Stakeholder in-depth interview discussion guide

Key aims and approach

Four on-line focus groups are being conducted with residents to provide further insight, complementing the findings from the questionnaire. The aims of these are:

- Opportunity for an informed and in-depth discussion with residents about living in the county and future local government proposals. These discussions will explicitly explore:
    - Sense of place and identity
    - Understanding of local government reorganisation and high-level perceptions about change, including potential benefits, concerns and mitigations
    - Future local council priorities and design
    - Views on changing from nine councils to two, including opportunities, concerns and mitigations
    - Views on each of the specific core options, including opportunities, concerns and mitigations

In essence, the focus groups will explore in-depth the ground covered in the questionnaire, and consequently the discussion guide is built around this.

9 participants will be recruited for each group (with 6-8 participating in practice per group because there will always be one to two drop-outs, despite best efforts to maximise participation – 6 or 7 participants tends to be the optimum number for an on-line discussion allowing sufficient opportunity for each participant to share their views).

As discussed, two groups will be with residents living in urban areas and two living in rural areas (these will be both self-defined and also validated against their postcode). This approach both allows us to explore the differences and similarities in perception between residents living in these different types of locations as well as reach a broad diversity of residents across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Each group will include a mix of key demographics such as location, sex, age and ethnicity so that the groups broadly reflect the profile of residents living in urban and rural areas.

The groups will take place on-line, via Zoom, on Thursday 4th September and Monday 8th September (these are provisional dates currently, and all groups will be completed by the close of the engagement exercise):

- 5.50pm to 7.30pm
- 7.50pm to 9.30pm

Participants will be offered a £50 thank you gift (incentive) for taking part and to maximise participation.

In advance of the discussions, the link to the engagement website will be shared and participants will be asked to review, although we will not rely on this and will be feeding participants with information throughout the discussions.

Discussion Guide

Please note: This is a discussion guide and will be used flexibly depending on the flow of discussion. This means that not every question will necessarily be asked in the way or order outlined below. However, we will make sure that all the key issues are explored fully.

On log-in:

- Participants will be held in a virtual waiting room and invited into the main forum at the start of the discussion.
- On joining the main room, participants will be asked to check that their audio and visual works and name labels changed to first names only (for ease and anonymity).

Introduction (c2-3 mins)

Key points to note:

- Background – why we're here and some of the things we plan to discuss [i.e. living in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and proposed changes to local councils in the area].
- Introduce facilitator.
- Introduce observers (if present).
- Ask to record the interview.
- Stress anonymity and confidentiality.
- Set ground rules – no right or wrong answers, honest and open, range of views encouraged.
- Respect different opinions.
- Encourage disagreement, agreement and debate – do it politely.
- One voice at a time.
- Allow others the space and time to share their views.
- Introduce key features of Zoom such as chat function and emoticons, and encourage use.
- Stress important that patient and flexible given challenges of technology and conducting on-line discussions.
- Stress that important people participate and input as much as they might in a face-to-face group – we can be relaxed and informal, but we want to make sure we cover the ground and use the time as effectively as possible.
- What happens to the information? [i.e. feed into decision-making process, along with a range of other information and evidence].
- Any questions?

Key lines of questioning

Warm-up, context and headline perceptions (c10 mins)

- Just so we can get to know each other a little bit, can I ask each of you to say briefly:
  - Your name?
  - Roughly, where you live?
  - What do you think about the area you live in? Why – what's good and what could be improved?

Your local area – sense of place and local identity (c15 mins)

- How do you describe where you're from when talking to someone who doesn't live nearby? Which names or places do you mention? Why do you use those names or places?

  Prompt/probe:
  - Do you see yourself as living in an urban, suburban, semi-rural or rural area – why?
  - Do you consider yourself as living in Nottinghamshire? Why?
  - What do you consider you nearest town? Why?
  - What is your association or link with Nottingham? Why?
  - Do you feel like you are part of your local authority area? Why?

Local government reorganisation (c20 mins)

[Note: Facilitator to share screen and read out information about the way councils are currently organised as per the questionnaire]

- What do you think about the current structure of councils and the approach to service delivery in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire? Why?

  Prompt/probe:
  - Before today, how aware were you of the current structure?
  - What's good about it/what works well? Why?
  - What's not good about it/could be improved? Why?
  - How well do the current arrangements suit an area such as yours (i.e. urban/rural)? Why?

[Note: Facilitator to share screen and read out information about local government reorganisation as per the questionnaire]

- What do you think about the Government's plans to reorganise local councils across England? Why?

  Prompt/probe:
  - Before today, how aware were you of these plans?
  - What do you think are the potential benefits of this, if any? Why?
  - What concerns, if any, do you have about the plans to reorganise local councils? Why?

Future local council design and priorities (c20 mins)

- What should be most important when designing a new council (e.g. what should be the key principles that it adopts or it is built around or tries to achieve)? Why?

  Prompt/probe:

  - Ensuring services work together
  - Making the council the right size to be sustainable
  - Providing good value, reliable services
  - Saving money and using council tax wisely
  - Working better with other local councils and the East Midlands Mayor
  - Making it easier for people to have their say and get involved
  - Working with local neighbourhoods and communities
  - Meeting local needs and being fair to all parts of the area
  - Promoting local identity and culture
  - Other

- What are the best ways for the new councils to involve people in local decisions? Why?
- How well is this done now? Why?
- And does this matter to you? Why?

  Prompt/probe:

  - Working directly with neighbourhoods
  - Public meetings or drop-ins
  - Online surveys or polls
  - Local councillors visiting communities
  - Community groups or forums
  - Social media updates and feedback
  - Council website updates
  - Digital newsletters
  - Information sent via post
  - Engaging with parish and town councils
  - Other

- What do you think should be the priorities for any new council to improve your local area? Why?

  Prompt/probe:

  - What’s important to you? Why?
  - What’s currently working well, and that you would like to continue working well? Why?
  - What’s not working well and is important to change/improve? Why?

Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, including core options (c20-25 mins)

[Note: Facilitator to share screen and read out information about the proposal to move from 9 to 2 councils as per the questionnaire]

- What do you think about the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two councils to run local government across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire area?

  Prompt/probe:
  - What do you think are the potential benefits of this, if any? Why?
  - What concerns, if any, do you have about this proposal? Why?
  - How may it impact you and your family? Why?
  - How may it impact your area? Why?
  - Is there anything you would like considered to help promote any potential benefits and/or mitigate/reduce any potential negative impacts?

[Note: Facilitator to share screen and read out information about the core option 1b as per the questionnaire]

- What do you think about this option? Why?

  Prompt/probe:
  - What do you think are the potential benefits of this, if any? Why?
  - What concerns, if any, do you have about this option? Why?
  - How may it impact you and your family? Why?
  - How may it impact your area? Why?
  - Is there anything you would like considered to help promote any potential benefits and/or mitigate/reduce any potential negative impacts?

[Note: Facilitator to share screen and read out information about the core option 1e as per the questionnaire]

- What do you think about this option? Why?

  Prompt/probe:
  - What do you think are the potential benefits of this, if any? Why?
  - What concerns, if any, do you have about this option? Why?
  - How may it impact you and your family? Why?
  - How may it impact your area? Why?
  - Is there anything you would like considered to help promote any potential benefits and/or mitigate/reduce any potential negative impacts?

Summing up (c5 mins)

- Overall, what do you think about the proposals and options?
- Are there any alternatives you would like considered?
- Is there anything else you would like to say this subject?
- Facilitator to sum up the key messages identified from the discussion to sense check that understood correctly.

- Facilitator to outline next steps – what will happen to the information.
- Sign-post to on-line consultation, if not already participated.
- Any final points or questions?
- Outline how thank you gifts will be provided.
- Thank and close.

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The future of local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Engagement report: Methodology and clarification report - October 2025

Introduction

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

Nottinghamshire currently has a two-tier system, with seven district and borough councils and a county council. Nottingham City, within the county boundary, is served separately by its own unitary council—making nine councils in total.

In February 2025, the Government invited local councils, including those in Nottinghamshire, to develop proposals to replace two-tier systems with larger unitary councils.

After reviewing options, Nottinghamshire's councils submitted an interim proposal in March 2025 to create two new unitary councils to replace the existing nine.

The main report summarises the findings of an engagement exercise with residents and stakeholders on these proposals. This was supported independently by Public Perspectives, specialists in public sector research and consultation since 2008.

Public Perspectives

Public Perspectives is a Market Research Society (MRS) company partner and member of the Social Research Association (the industry bodies in the UK) and holds Cyber Essentials certification.

The project was led and managed by Public Perspectives' Director of Research and Engagement, Mark Yeadon. Mark Yeadon has over 25 years of research, evaluation and consultation experience in the public and charitable sectors, including working for two local authorities and Central Government. Mark has a 1st class degree in Politics, a Masters (Distinction) in Applied Social and Market Research and is a RICS trained property and built environment surveyor (with a Masters in Real Estate at distinction from the University College of Estate Management). He is a full certified member of the Market Research Society (CMRS) and a former trustee of the Social Research Association.

Public Perspectives had no prior professional, commercial or personal affiliation with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire or its partner councils. Public Perspectives has acted with independence and objectivity in the design, data collection, analysis and reporting of the engagement exercise and to reflect effectively the views of respondents.

Throughout this process, Public Perspectives has worked with the nominated project leads representing the council partners and through the agreed partner/LGR governance processes.

Methodology and clarification

This document is supplementary to the main report, published on the 1st October 2025, following requests of clarification from two councils.

Throughout the engagement process, interim headline findings were shared with partner councils on a weekly basis. A draft of the final report was made available to council partners on Tuesday 23rd September 2025 and subject to an initial review process involving representatives from all partner councils. This included a presentation to communication leads from each partner council on Wednesday 24th September 2025 and subsequent sharing of the draft report to the same group. A similar offer of a presentation was also made to Chief Executives, but the opportunity was not taken up. This document is produced in response to subsequent review and comments, following publication by council partners of the main report on Wednesday 1st October 2025.

The document provides further detail about the methodology, including examples of the analysis and selected comments/quotes from respondents to the engagement exercise, providing further detail and insight. It also includes clarity about some of the key findings.

The document should be read alongside the main report and also published alongside it or at least included as an appendix to the main report when submitted to Government as part of the final proposals.

The report authors ask that any readers refer directly to Public Perspectives where further clarity may be required about the findings of the engagement exercise.

Methodology

Context

- The engagement exercise was conducted over a six-week period ending on Sunday 14th September 2025.
- The aims of the engagement exercise established and agreed by council partners were:
  - Make it as easy as possible for residents to understand and share views.
  - Improve public awareness and understanding of LGR.
  - Gather public opinion and understand what's important to people [to shape future organisations].
  - Ensure representation across the geography.
  - Demonstrate to Government that criteria on engagement has been met.

- The main mechanism for capturing responses was an online questionnaire open to all interested parties, promoted through councils' websites, communication channels and promotional/marketing activity, including a dedicated website (lgrnotts.org), as well as outreach events and engagement with stakeholders.
- The questionnaire was also available in alternative formats on request, such as paper copies, alongside e-mail, phone, BSL and translation support.
- Relatedly, four focus groups were conducted involving 34 local residents reflecting the diversity of Nottinghamshire and organised by urban and rural areas. These focus groups allowed the emerging findings from the engagement process to be unpacked and views about the proposals to be discussed in-depth, both adding further insight as well as validating the findings from the engagement survey.
- In total, the engagement questionnaire received 11,483 responses.
- This level of response compares well to other similar exercises conducted in the region or across the country.

Key points to note

- This is an 'engagement' exercise. It is not a formal or statutory consultation or a referendum.
- The engagement exercise is not a representative sample research survey, as per the aims of the process established and agreed by all partner councils. It is designed to provide valuable information and insight. However, the findings should not be treated as conclusive as may be the case with a robust research survey. This includes the results not being suitable for statistical tests of significance, although notable differences between council areas or other demographics are likely to be meaningful.
- Whilst the findings of the engagement help shape proposals on the future of local councils in Nottinghamshire, they are to be considered alongside other information and evidence including detailed options appraisals about the viability and suitability of different options.
- This is not a one-off exercise. Engagement with key and strategic stakeholders preceded this engagement exercise and there is on-going engagement.
- The final proposals from councils must be submitted to Government by 28 November 2025, and feedback on how any proposal will be taken forward for Nottinghamshire is expected in 2026. This will then be subject to statutory consultation by Government.
- Alongside the focus groups, a number of the questions in the engagement questionnaire are open-ended text questions or qualitative in nature. This approach was agreed with all partner

councils. It was designed to capture comments and insight about the benefits and concerns relating to LGR, the proposals and options.
- Council partners requested the inclusion of open-ended questions, especially for options 1b and 1e, noting at the time the limitations of such question types. Whilst analysis of qualitative data is conducted robustly and independently, the findings should be treated as valuable insight and indicative rather than as conclusive, especially given the exercise was an engagement process rather than a research-based exercise.
- Responses to the engagement exercise were based on available and known information at the time. The engagement questionnaire was designed to have a stand-alone quality i.e. that respondents could answer it without reference to further information. This included brief descriptions and information about LGR, the proposals and options, including maps. In addition, respondents were encouraged to read further background information on the lgrnotts.org website, including the options appraisal and interim proposals submitted to Government in March 2025.
- The report authors ask that these points are noted by all parties when using the findings of the engagement exercise in developing proposals and in public statements or press releases. This is so that the findings are presented appropriately and not mis-represented.

Approach to quantitative data analysis

- Quantitative data captured through the questionnaire has been analysed using specialist survey software – SNAP XMP (www.snapsurveys.com). This is one of the longest established and widely used specialist survey software amongst the public sector and local authorities in the UK.
- Each quantitative question has been analysed and reported overall and by local council area. As is the nature with self-selecting/open-access questionnaires, the responses are not proportional to the population sizes in each of the local council areas. Consequently, the results are analysed and reported both as they are (i.e. non-weighted) and also re-weighted to be in-line with the population sizes in each local council area, given the importance of local council areas as building blocks in any future local government arrangement for Nottinghamshire.
- The quantitative data has also been analysed by other demographics such as sex, age, ethnicity, disability and housing status. Notable differences in responses related to these demographics are reported.

Approach to qualitative data analysis

- The open-ended comments from the engagement questionnaire and the focus groups have been subject to thematic analysis – an established and widely used qualitative analysis technique. This approach aims to systematically identify key themes from the data, alongside an indication of volume and strength of opinion, and presenting exemplifying quotes.
- This process is iterative and both manual and automated, included using AI tools, especially important given the volume of responses.
- It is also worth noting that whilst each individual qualitative/open-ended question is analysed specifically, the themes/findings are identified, contextualised and considered in light of all responses made by a respondent and those of other respondents. In other words, comments are not just analysed in isolation – the use of automated and AI software allows such holistic analysis to be conducted across a large data-set.

- The steps adopted are as follows:
  - Open-ended comments and focus group transcripts are initially reviewed manually by two researchers independently of one another. This provides an initial gauge of the parameters of the data and the key emerging themes.
  - The comments and transcripts are then subject to further analysis using specialist qualitative data analysis software. This is primarily NVivo 15 (www.lumivero.com/products/nvivo), which is one of the leading and longest established qualitative data analysis software. NVivo 15 also includes in-built AI to assist in identifying key themes.
  - This begins with sentiment analysis to assess the levels of positive, neutral/mixed and negative responses.
  - This is then followed by further thematic analysis, identifying and describing key themes, as well as volume/strength of opinion, relationships between themes and relationships with other variables such as demographics. It also allows for the organisation of the data into these key themes and therefore identification of key quotes to exemplify the themes.
  - This work is predominantly conducted by a lead researcher with a second researcher reviewing the analysis and associated key themes/findings and acting as a critical friend.
  - In addition, as a final sense-check, anonymised data is interrogated through open-source AI platforms (such as Microsoft Copilot and ChatGPT 5).

- The themes and findings are presented including approximated percentages/numbers of respondents (rounded up or down). This is reasonable given that the qualitative comments were made as part of a questionnaire and there have been thousands of such responses (i.e. there is a large sample rather than just a few respondents). This is to help provide an indication of relative importance of the themes/findings. These should be treated as such (i.e. approximations) rather than conclusive percentages, given the qualitative nature of the data. Further quantification beyond key themes is resisted to avoid ‘over-quantification’ of qualitative data, which is methodologically not good practice.
- Summaries of thematic analysis and a selection of exemplifying quotes for options 1b and 1e have been made available to council partners. These are provided as examples of the method and to provide further detail and insight. Please note that these are only summaries reflecting the final output of a thematic analysis. The actual thematic analysis is more detailed and essentially a working document/process with detail and notes held within the qualitative data analysis software and on paper.

Clarification of key findings relating to options 1b and 1e

- The engagement questionnaire included open-ended questions relating to options 1b and 1e – two short-listed options following the options appraisal process included in interim proposals to Government in March 2025:

  – Option 1b is: Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling (known as Option 1b). This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Rushcliffe. The second covering Gedling, Broxtowe, and Nottingham City.
  – Option 1e is: Two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Gedling. The second covering Broxtowe, Nottingham City, and Rushcliffe.

- Some council partners have asked for further clarity about these findings and their communication within the main report. Findings relating specifically to these two options can be found at paragraphs 26 to 29 inclusive in the Executive Summary and 6.10 to 6.18 inclusive in the main body of the report (pages 43 to 46 inclusive).
- The specific findings in the main report relating to these options should be read alongside wider findings relating to other questions asked in the engagement exercise, including perceptions about the effectiveness of the current structure of local councils, views about local government reorganisation in general, and responses about the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two councils to run local government across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Not only are these findings relevant for each option, respondents themselves sometimes referred back to points previously made and commented on each option in light of their responses to other questions.
- Likewise, the report authors are keen that the detail related to options 1b and 1e does not distract from key findings and concerns relating to these options and the approach/design of any new councils. This is so that any future configuration of options and the subsequent councils reflect the concerns and expectations of respondents. This includes focusing on delivering good quality core and universal services/issues, alongside value for money and meeting local needs. Relatedly, respondents highlighted the importance of involving residents in decision-making and local area/neighbourhood working. This includes understanding local issues and priorities and tailoring services and support to different communities (both equality groups, different localities and urban-rural communities) as part of any future arrangements.
- Please also note points made earlier about the methodology, analysis of qualitative data and use of approximated percentages to indicate relative importance of key themes/findings.
- At the risk of being reductionist and the danger of re-writing a published report that could lead to differing interpretation, below is a bullet-point summary of the headline findings relating to options 1b and 1e. These are presented in such a way to reduce the risk of misinterpretation based on the reader's background or sentiment towards either of the options. This clarification should be used positively to increase understanding and insight, and not used to undermine the main report:

  – The majority of respondents had concerns about both options 1b and 1e.
  – The nature of many of these concerns are similar for each option to lesser or greater degrees. These include:

  - concerns about the inclusion and exclusion of surrounding areas of Nottingham City i.e. boundary concerns;
  - being included in a council with Nottingham City that could inherent some of the perceived issues experienced by the city and its council; and
  - rural areas being dominated by the city including lack of rural voice, representation and inappropriate services to meet local need.

- Regarding boundary concerns and specifically option 1b, approximately half of respondents raised concerns that the proposed boundaries are illogical or unfair with the exclusion of some neighbouring areas such as West Bridgford in Rushcliffe Borough Council and some areas close to the city in Ashfield District Council, which are seen as integral to Nottingham's urban area. At the same time, the council covering Nottingham City is considered too large in scope, bringing in areas that do not align in terms of identity, characteristics, and access to services with the city, including rural areas.
- Regarding 1e, concerns were also raised about boundaries with some respondents stating that the option excluded locations surrounding the city in council areas including Gedling Borough Council and Ashfield District Council area. Similarly, there were specific concerns about joining outlying rural and other areas to the city that have little to no relationship with it.
- Despite concerns, approximately a third of respondents either explicitly supported option 1e or said they preferred it compared to option 1b as the best of the two options or least worst option (approximately half of this third explicitly supported the option and the other half were positive towards it in the context of comparing it against option 1b). This support or positivity to option 1e was often due to respondents stating that they considered 1e to be more geographically coherent and/or is a cleaner North-South split with a better division of populations and resources. That said, some support/positivity (about half of those that supported 1e) was caveated by continued concerns around boundaries or urban-rural imbalance and/or conditional upon benefits being realised.
- This compares to approximately a tenth of respondents that explicitly supported option 1b. This is because they believe it is the most suitable option in terms of geography with Nottingham City at the heart of the new council and combining areas with common links (and a wider county-wide council drawing in other parts of Nottinghamshire). As with option 1e, support for 1b was often cited on the condition of realising the benefits of LGR.

- In short, with both options notable concerns exist and dominate the responses i.e. a majority of respondents have concerns about either or both of the options, including concerns about LGR in general. Option1e does receive greater positivity and support than option 1b based on qualitative comments, but this is from a minority of respondents, in some cases is a preference rather than outright support, and with both options positivity/support is sometimes caveated by concerns or conditional on achieving the potential benefits of LGR and/or minimising disruption to residents and services.
- It is also helpful to note that respondents tended to consider and respond to questions about options 1b and 1e collectively. Consequently, many of the points are common across both options and respondents compared and contrasted each option, which in part accounts for the marginal preference for option 1e over 1b by a minority of respondents.
- The report authors ask that all parties seek to utilise these findings in a constructive way to inform their final proposals and that findings are used appropriately and not misrepresented in proposals and in public statements or press releases.

LGR Stakeholder Engagement
Rushcliffe BC and Nottinghamshire CC`
Detailed Summary of Responses

Contents

Introduction

As part of the partnership's response to the Government's statutory invitation for proposals on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), Rushcliffe Borough Council and Nottinghamshire County Council undertook a comprehensive programme of stakeholder engagement. This was designed to meet the Government's criteria for meaningful engagement with local partners, businesses, and communities, ensuring that the views of those most affected by potential changes were heard and considered.

The Government's guidance emphasises the importance of demonstrating local support, addressing concerns, and evidencing how proposals will improve local governance. In response, Nottinghamshire County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council adopted a structured and inclusive engagement approach to gather a wide range of perspectives from across the county.

Our engagement strategy was twofold:

Strategic Stakeholder Engagement

We identified key countywide and sub-countywide stakeholders with whom the Council and its partners have established strategic relationships. These included representatives from the education sector, business and development communities, voluntary and community sector organisations, and public service partners including Nottingham City Council Commissioners. Senior officers, including Chief Executive leads, facilitated direct engagement through formal meetings, interviews, and written submissions to explore the implications of LGR on service delivery, partnership working, and local priorities.

Local and Community-Based Engagement

To ensure local voices were captured, we worked closely with district and borough Councils, who led engagement with local stakeholders such as Town and Parish Councils, grassroots voluntary organisations, and local businesses. These sessions were complemented by a series of public engagement activities, including surveys, workshops, and focus groups, coordinated across all nine Councils.

In total, the engagement programme included:

- Over 665 young people consulted through 45 focus groups across all districts.
- Targeted sessions with education leaders, SEND professionals, and alternative providers.
- Engagement with voluntary and community sector (VCSE) organisations via focus groups and interviews.
- Consultation with developers and business leaders, trade unions, MPs, and Council staff.
- Member and Town and Parish Council engagement workshops and surveys, alongside outreach in local areas.

To support this process, a short online survey was developed to capture views on the opportunities and challenges of LGR. This was distributed widely and complemented by in-person and virtual engagement sessions. The insights gathered have been used to inform the development of the proposal and ensure that it reflects the aspirations, concerns, and priorities of Nottinghamshire's communities.

This report summarises the key themes and feedback from each stakeholder group, providing a clear evidence base for the Council’s submission and demonstrating our commitment to inclusive, transparent, and locally informed reform.

Stakeholder Feedback Summary

Education Sector

To gather informed perspectives on the implications of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) for education services, a targeted engagement programme was conducted with stakeholders across the education sector. This included school leaders, SEND professionals, and service providers, ensuring a broad and representative range of voices.

The methodology involved:

- Structured Interviews: Direct conversations with key education stakeholders to explore current strengths, challenges, and future considerations.
- Written Submissions: Participants were invited to provide detailed feedback on service delivery, funding models, and strategic priorities under LGR.

This approach captured both operational insights and strategic viewpoints, particularly around SEND provision, partnership working, and service continuity. The feedback has informed planning for future governance models, with a focus on preserving effective practices, addressing areas for improvement, and ensuring equitable outcomes for children and families across Nottinghamshire.

1. What the Current Council Does Well

Strong Relationships & Communication

- Open, responsive communication with Council officers and teams.
- Constructive partnerships with providers and schools.
- Trust and dialogue with senior staff and SEND teams.
- There is a strong desire among education leaders to preserve existing relationships across districts, particularly those built through collaborative work with Nottinghamshire County Council.
- One contributor expressed sadness at potentially losing ties with districts like Broxtowe and Gedling, highlighting the value of current partnerships.

SEND System Strengths

- Fair and needs-focused EHCP and funding processes.
- Effective safeguarding and vetting of providers.
- Tendering systems for Alternative Provision (AP) are generally well-received.
- The Nottinghamshire SEND funding model is widely praised for being fair and effective. Concerns were raised about the comparative quality of the city model, with stakeholders keen to retain the strengths of the current system.
- There is recognition of the need to prepare children for transitions between unitary authorities, especially those in special schools, and to maintain high-quality provision throughout.

Support Services

- Governance, HR, legal, and finance support praised.
- Good safeguarding training and support from C+L and C+I teams.
- Clear commissioning pathways and quality assurance.

2. Areas for Improvement in Education and SEND Services

Process Efficiency & Digitisation

- Streamline paperwork (e.g., linking bids to EHCPs).
- Faster placement times and clearer referral systems.
- Digitise documentation and make it portable across services.

Funding & Resources

- Simplify funding systems to reduce admin burden on SENDCOs.
- More special school places and quicker access to funding.
- Better feedback and transparency in AP tender outcomes.
- Stakeholders emphasised the importance of maintaining Nottinghamshire's SEND funding mechanisms, which are seen as superior to alternatives. There is concern that changes could lead to inequities, particularly under proposed boundary models (e.g., 1b and 1e).
- There is a call to ensure funding systems continue to support the most vulnerable children and do not shift too rapidly, which could cause anxiety among families.

Joined-Up Working

- Improve collaboration between education, health, and social care.
- Align referral processes across departments (e.g., SEN, EHCP, Virtual School).
- Adopt place-based approaches that integrate services.
- Contributors stressed the need for a unified approach to SEND across both new unitaries, with consistent standards and shared good practice. There is concern that boundary changes could disrupt service delivery and create disparities.
- The importance of aligning SEND planning with wider Children and Young People (CYP) and family services was highlighted, with a recommendation to lead with SEND priorities in strategic documents.

Staffing & Training

- Invest in CPD and training for mainstream staff.
- Increase number of caseworkers.
- Provide access to specialist training (e.g., MAPA, positive handling).

EHCP Quality

- Improve clarity and relevance of EHCPs (e.g., outdated content).
- Ensure EHCPs reflect current needs and are updated regularly.

3. Suggestions for Future Planning

Structural & Strategic Recommendations

- Retain effective district-based ICDS team structures.
- Use existing Council assets (e.g., buildings) for localised provision.
- Avoid duplication and ensure continuity during transition.

- Several stakeholders favour a “Greater Nottingham” model, citing its alignment with existing service provision and travel patterns. There is concern that alternative models may introduce inequities or disrupt effective collaboration.
- There is a strong desire to preserve the Nottinghamshire Learner First approach and extend its benefits across both new authorities.

Support for Families

- More accessible support services and early help.
- Create parent support groups and befriending services.
- Simplify systems for families to access help.
- Contributors emphasised the need to support families through transitions, particularly those with children in special education. Parents are likely to be vocal if they perceive a risk to their child’s education, so clear communication and gradual change are essential.

Policy & Governance

- Merge SEND services across Nottinghamshire for consistency.
- Consider geography and community needs in Council boundaries.
- Address disparities in Council income and avoid increasing inequalities.
- There is a clear call to address potential inequities arising from proposed boundary models. Stakeholders want assurance that good practice will be rolled out consistently across both unitaries, avoiding disparities in service quality or access.

Voluntary and Community Sector

To understand the perspectives of the voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector on the potential impacts of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), a targeted engagement programme was completed. This approach aimed to capture the views of organisations deeply embedded in local communities and delivering essential services.

The methodology included:

- Focus Groups: Facilitated discussions with VCSE representatives to explore concerns, opportunities, and expectations related to LGR.
- Written Submissions: Organisations were invited to provide detailed feedback on how proposed changes might affect their operations, partnerships, and service users.
- Interviews: One-on-one conversations allowed for deeper exploration of sector-specific issues and the potential implications of structural reform.

This multi-method approach ensured a broad and inclusive evidence base, reflecting the diversity of the VCSE sector across Nottinghamshire. The insights gathered have informed the development of proposals that aim to protect community relationships, enhance service delivery, and ensure that grassroots voices are central to the reorganisation process.

Key Themes Identified

Uncertainty and Concern

- Many organisations expressed uncertainty about the impact of LGR, citing a lack of clear information and communication.
- Concerns include potential loss of trusted relationships, disruption to services, and centralisation that may reduce local responsiveness.
- Some fear LGR may mirror past reorganisations (e.g., NHS changes) that were costly and ineffective.

Value of Existing Relationships

- Strong emphasis on the importance of current partnerships with District and Parish Councils.
- Organisations value local knowledge, face-to-face contact, and community-focused support.
- There is concern that these relationships may be weakened or lost in a unitary structure.

Need for Clear Communication and Consultation

- Calls for transparent planning, early engagement, and consultation with VCSEs.
- Desire for co-production and inclusive decision-making, rather than top-down approaches.
- Organisations want to be kept informed and involved in shaping the transition.

Support for Community and Grassroots Work

- Recognition of the critical role of grassroots organisations in delivering local services.
- Requests for continued or increased funding, volunteer support, and local hubs.
- Emphasis on community cohesion, health and wellbeing, and intergenerational collaboration.

Opportunities for Improvement

Some see LGR as a chance to:

- Streamline services
- Reduce bureaucracy
- Improve strategic planning
- Integrate services more effectively
- Environmental organisations highlighted the potential to embed nature recovery and climate resilience into local planning.

Risks of Centralisation

Widespread concern that centralising services may:

- Dilute local representation
- Make services less accessible
- Ignore rural and vulnerable communities
- Fear that decision-makers will be too remote from the people they serve.

Business & Developers

As part of the broader stakeholder engagement programme for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), targeted consultations with representatives from the business and development sectors was conducted. These sessions aimed to explore the potential implications of LGR on strategic planning, infrastructure, service delivery, and economic growth.

The event brought together approximately 40 representatives from across the developer, construction, investor, and strategic regeneration sectors to help understand and unpack the impact of and potential for LGR in Nottinghamshire and Nottingham.

The methodology included:

- Structured engagement meetings with business leaders, developers, and infrastructure partners.
- Discussions focused on key operational and strategic themes, including boundary alignment, shared services, planning efficiency, and capital investment risks.
- Feedback was gathered through facilitated dialogue, allowing stakeholders to raise concerns, identify opportunities, and offer recommendations for future governance models.

This approach ensured that the voices of economic stakeholders were captured, particularly in relation to growth, investment, and operational readiness. The insights have informed proposals that seek to balance efficiency with continuity, and to align local government structures with regional economic ambitions, including those of the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA).

Geographical and Strategic Considerations

- Attendees questioned whether the preferred model had been tested across different areas—it had.
- Concerns about boundary changes and their impact on growth and governance.
- Importance of maintaining strategic alliances (e.g. Bassetlaw, Newark & Sherwood, Rushcliffe) to retain government support and funding.

Adult Social Care (ASC) & Financial Implications

- ASC distribution across regions is a challenge.
- Cost implications and service delivery need careful balancing.

Shared Services & Collaboration

- Strong interest in shared services to reduce duplication and improve efficiency.
- Sectors mentioned: civil engineering, highways, waste.
- Emphasis on leveraging existing partnerships, especially in the business sector.

Operational Readiness

- Existing infrastructure (Arc and Via depots) is well-positioned to support any model.
- Operational disruption expected—requires robust risk management.

Housing & Procurement

- Merging authorities could lead to inconsistencies in housing contracts and procurement.
- Need for continuity planning post-2028.

Risk Management & Governance

- Suggestions included revising meeting systems and introducing local area committees.
- Governance changes must not hinder progress—"new structures shouldn't get in the way of progression."

Planning Efficiency

- Potential to streamline planning processes through collaboration and AI tools.
- Goal: faster approvals and improved responsiveness.

Devolution & Economic Growth

- LGR aligns with East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) goals.
- Key projects: Freeport, Investment Zones, STEP Fusion at West Burton.
- Push for more powers to be devolved to the East Midlands Mayor.

Capital Investment Risks

- Concerns about delays or pauses in capital funding due to structural changes.

Communication & Transparency

- Open communication is essential to maintain alignment and stakeholder engagement.

Opportunities Identified

- **Waste & Planning Alignment**: Unified approach for consistency.
- **Asset Rationalisation**: Strategic management of depots, leisure centres, housing.
- **Economic Growth**: Access to EMCCA funding and innovation zones.
- **Rural Cohesion**: Support for agri-tech and low-carbon sectors.

Recommendations

1. **Preserve Strategic Alliances** - Maintain existing collaborations to retain funding and continuity.
2. **Mitigate Operational Risks** - Develop contingency plans for disruptions from boundary and structural changes.
3. **Enhance Shared Services** - Explore models to improve efficiency and reduce duplication.
4. **Streamline Planning** - Invest in tools and partnerships to accelerate planning processes.
5. **Ensure Transparent Communication** - Keep stakeholders informed and engaged throughout the transition

Nottinghamshire Police

Taken from a letter from Assistant Chief Constable Leona Scurr, Nottinghamshire Police dated 3 November 2025 sent to Adrian Smith, Chief Executive Nottinghamshire County Council and Adam Hill, Chief Executive Rushcliffe Borough Council:

Dear Mr Smith and Mr Hill,

I am writing on behalf of Nottinghamshire Police Chief Constable Steve Cooper in relation to your email requesting the views of Nottinghamshire Police on the ongoing discussions around Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the potential redrawing of council boundaries within Nottinghamshire.

As part of our commitment to supporting a smooth transition under any future governance model, we have undertaken an initial assessment of how proposed changes may impact policing operations, partnership working, and service delivery. While Nottinghamshire Police is fully prepared to operate under any LGR structure that is ultimately adopted, we believe it is important to share our early observations to help inform the ongoing discussions.

From a policing perspective, a division that aligns with existing boundary lines would offer several operational advantages. Specifically.

- *Continuity in established partnership arrangements, particularly in safeguarding and community safety*
- *Consistency in performance reporting and data comparison across like-for-like areas*
- *A more seamless experience for residents in terms of service access and accountability*
- *Reduced disruption to operational structures and resource deployment*

We recognise that there are multiple models under consideration, each with its own merits and challenges. Our intention is not to advocate for any particular outcome, but rather to highlight the practical implications for policing and public safety. We remain open to alternative configurations and welcome further dialogue with all stakeholders to ensure that any future arrangements support effective service delivery across the county.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you wish to discuss these matters further. We are committed to working collaboratively throughout this process and ensuring that public safety remains at the forefront of any structural changes.

Nottingham City Council Commissioners

Email received from the Commissioners: ‘As you submit your LGR proposals to your Councils you may wish to reference Nottingham City Council Commissioners as having been engaged in your stakeholder sections. As Commissioners we so feel we have been engaged which we do thank you for.’

Young People

To ensure that the voices of young people were meaningfully included in the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) consultation, Nottinghamshire County Council's Youth Service facilitated a targeted youth engagement programme. This initiative aimed to understand young people's perspectives on the proposed changes, their priorities, and the potential impact on their lives and communities.

The methodology involved:

- Participation of over 665 young people from all seven districts across Nottinghamshire.
- Engagement through a variety of youth-focused settings, including:
- Young People's Centres
- Link Clubs (for young people with disabilities)
- Mobile Youth Provision
- Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs)

45 focus groups were conducted, structured around three core questions:

1. What changes would you like to see from the LGR proposals?
2. How do you think these changes will affect you?
3. What are your top three priorities?

The consultation was designed to be inclusive and accessible, capturing both qualitative insights and district-level priorities.

Further insights are drawn on youth data sources such as the 2024 Make Your Mark Survey and the 2025 Integrated Care System Consultation to inform the discussion framework. The findings provide a rich evidence base for shaping future governance models that reflect the needs, aspirations, and lived experiences of young people across Nottinghamshire.

1. What Changes Would Young People Like to See?

General Sentiment
Mixed views on reorganisation:

- Positive: Potential for better transport, investment, and efficiency.
- Concerns: Loss of local identity, confusion over services, and reduced youth provision.

Key Issues Raised

Mental Health:
Most urgent concern across all districts.
Requests for:

- Early and accessible support
- Calm spaces in schools
- Reduced academic pressure

Safety
Need for:

- Increased police presence
- Better street lighting
- Tackling antisocial behaviour, drugs, and vaping

Youth Spaces
Seen as essential for inclusion, wellbeing, and community connection.

Transport
Especially in rural areas:

- Cheaper fares
- More reliable services
- Better connectivity to education, leisure, and jobs

Cost of Living & Housing
Concerns about affordability and financial pressures on families.

Environment & Homelessness

- Cleaner green spaces
- Climate action
- Support for homeless individuals

Voice in Decision-Making

- Strong demand for youth involvement and feedback loops:
- “You said, we did” approach
- Transparency and accountability from Councils

2. How Do Young People Think These Changes Will Affect Them?

Awareness & Engagement
Young people showed:

- Curiosity and optimism
- Caution and confusion about the complexity of the model

Concerns
Loss of Local Representation

- Fear that decisions will be made far from communities
- Reduced access to help and services

Funding Inequality

- Worries that rural/smaller districts may lose out
- Nottingham City’s financial constraints raised concerns about cuts to youth services

Youth Centres

- Seen as vital for mental health and safety
- Anxiety over sustainability and funding

Positive Outlook (if well-managed)
Potential benefits:

- Stronger collaboration between areas
- Improved transport and service delivery
- Better access to opportunities

Desire for:

- Realistic expectations
- Clear communication
- Genuine youth participation in shaping future decisions

2. Top Three Priorities by District

Young people selected their top priorities from a list informed by:

- 2024 Make Your Mark Survey (12,035 responses)
- 2025 Integrated Care System Consultation

Common Themes Across Districts

- Mental Health: Top priority in every district
- Drugs & Alcohol, Poverty, Education, and Crime & Safety were also frequently selected

District	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Ashfield	Mental Health	Drugs & Alcohol	Crime & Safety
Bassetlaw	Mental Health	Poverty	Education
Broxtowe	Mental Health	Drugs & Alcohol	Education
Gedling	Mental Health	Social Media	Access to Resources
Mansfield	Mental Health	Education	Crime & Safety / Poverty
Newark & Sherwood	Mental Health / Education	Poverty	Drugs & Alcohol
Rushcliffe	Mental Health	Drugs & Alcohol	Poverty

Conclusion

Young people are not resistant to change, but they want:

- Fairness in funding and service access
- Inclusion in decision-making
- Wellbeing to be at the heart of reforms
- Respect for local identity
- Transparency and follow-through on feedback

Town and Parish Councils

Key points from this consultation were:

Planning and Preparation

- Concerned, reactive, low proactive planning
- Lack of preparation; limited discussion at parish council level
- Uncertainty about responsibilities, roles, and impact of LGR
- Concerns about capacity: part-time clerks, recruitment challenges, volunteer skills
- Training, CPD, and networking needed to manage new assets/services
- Engagement primarily digital, limiting input
- Questions about local grants, parish council status, and perception under LGR
- Planning and preparation are limited; support and guidance are sought
- Financial clarity and partnership strategies are key priorities moving forward

Opportunities and Risks

Risk-focused; cautious optimism about potential benefits

Opportunities

- Pooled resources could improve finances and service delivery.
- Devolved powers and better local accountability.
- Potential to reduce bureaucracy and support residents more effectively.
- Improved recycling and standardisation of services.
- Desire to work with NALC and other parishes for collective voice.
- Larger councils seen as faceless; small councils value local, efficient service.
- Emphasis on clear communication, collaboration, and support networks.

Risks

- Financial: cost, debt transfer, precept increases, and funding clarity.
- Governance: loss of local identity, decision-making power, MP/borough connection.
- Capacity: workload on parish councillors, reliance on volunteers, HR/training support.
- Planning and integration: IT, branding, elections, neighbourhood forums, and smaller councils being overlooked.
- Timeline perceived as rushed; uncertainty on roles of T&PCs.

Finances

- Cautious, seeking clarity
- Concern over association with city finances
- Lack of clarity on funding, grants, delegation schemes, and asset acquisition
- Precept management, potential increases, and local control are key issues
- Contingency planning, covenants, and rebranding costs are considerations

Partnership Working

- Opportunistic but cautious; need guidance
- Desire to work with NALC and other parishes for collective voice.
- Larger councils seen as faceless; small councils value local, efficient service.

- Interest in joining resources or clusters (e.g., RCAN, “Big 6”).
- Emphasis on clear communication, collaboration, and support networks.
- Questions on how LGR output will affect PCs and larger partnerships.

Overall Observations

- Thinking about LGR primarily in terms of risks and responsibilities.
- Opportunities are acknowledged but discussed less frequently.
- Planning and preparation are limited; support and guidance are sought.
- Financial clarity and partnership strategies are key priorities moving forward.

Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils (NALC)

It’s very much a mixed picture in terms of how well-prepared town and parish councils are for LGR and devolution and of course different districts and boroughs in the county have differing numbers of town and parish councils.

Rushcliffe and Gedling are well provided for, largely through the role RCAN plays in supporting town and parish councils in these areas and the working relationships with those councils.

It will be critical for the new unitary councils to have contact and preferably enhanced commissions with NALC and RCAN and these contracts become the conduit into town and parish councils in terms of support and exploring opportunities. The town and parish councils won’t be able to transform without this degree of external support.

Communication with town and parish councils will be vital.

Parish-ing is a big concern, large areas are currently unparished. Parish-ing (and community governance reviews) needs to be done correctly using parish liaison officers and government really needs to provide funding for this.

There are opportunities for town and parishes to take on local assets, but there are going to be skills and capacity gaps that will need proper consideration in order to allow opportunities to be realised and importantly sustainable.

The unitary councils need to take the lead on local democratic structures.

Government reference to Neighbourhood Committees is not clear in terms of the role town and parish councils will have, so this will need to be worked through as part of creating new governance arrangements.

“Go Collaborate” is a good online community engagement and consultation platform, a similar model could be developed as part of the unitary council’s approach.

Parkwood Leisure (Operator for four Rushcliffe leisure centres and Rufford Country Park)

Providing as much certainty as possible, as soon as possible on how the new unitary councils will be structured and operate (and wish to commission) will be critical to ensure businesses such as Parkwood are able to do robust business planning

Implementation planning prior to vesting day will be equally critical to provide clarity to businesses

Unitarisation provides an opportunity to take the best bits of how leisure contracts work across the county and roll that approach out over a broader geography.

It will be interesting to see how certain demographics influence the overall priorities of the new unitary councils. For example, GP referrals to leisure prescription are very common in the city/urban areas but very low in more affluent rural areas. Will the new unitary councils be driven by the areas of highest need when it comes to the allocation of resources at the expense of other areas?

Leisure commissioning and procurement will be very important to get right and ensuring that unintended consequences to do not impact upon the ability of medium sized delivery partners to bid for leisure contracts that may become fewer and larger under the new unitary models.

FrameworkHA (organisation that supports people facing homelessness and the most vulnerable in society)

Managing homelessness and adult vulnerability is an incredibly important service – creation of new unitary councils must be seen as an opportunity to build on the excellent working relationships already in existence, and to capitalise on the desire to put the prevention agenda at the heart of how the new councils will operate.

Being part of the early transition plan discussions will be critical to ensure co-collaboration and co-production of new ways of working, with greater emphasis put on proactive funding to enable the delivery of services to continue.

It's important that the transition period is used to identify the best way to minimize the risk of uncertainty and to capitalise on the opportunities of determining the best ways of working in the future – being part of the 'strategic conversation' will be incredibly important.

FrameworkHA is well placed to provide a commissioning model for the new unitary councils, that will ensure a joined up and consistent service, focusing on the prevention agenda and working closely with existing and new neighbourhood groups.

NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire ICS & ICB

Shaping new ways of working around the building blocks of health will be important, as will transferring the strong existing relationships across the new councils.

Implementation needs to be as seamless as possible with services aligned around communities

It will be important to assess the concept of 'neighbourhoods' with communities to check how relatable they are.

Team structures within the new unitary councils will need to work for people who live in the county, not for ease of the organisation.

The voluntary sector has an incredibly important part to play in the culture of 'support' not 'command and control

The Liberation model in Northumberland is an example of a good operating model

Commissioning models can be siloed, there is an opportunity to capitalise on working with the voluntary sector more when it comes to commissioning.

Nottingham & Nottinghamshire ICS

Neighbourhood focus is going to be critical, using the 'building blocks of health' also known as the broader determinants of health, to drive and develop local partnerships.

Implementing a holistic sense of 'place' from a health perspective is very much an existing strength of the district and borough councils across Nottinghamshire and the model can be encapsulated within the new unitary councils.

It will be important to define 'neighbourhood' in the new unitary councils, with model neighbourhood guidance expected which will define neighbourhood population sizes.

Joint commissioning is going to be critical, especially in relation to the working with the voluntary sector, with which there are significant opportunities to build on the already great work taking place.

Member Engagement Workshops (including the Member Engagement Survey)

To capture the views of elected members on the implications and opportunities of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), there was the facilitation of a series of structured engagement activities. These included targeted Member Engagement Workshops and a Member Engagement Survey, designed to explore Councillors' perspectives on governance, service delivery, and community outcomes under proposed new Council models.

The methodology was designed to be inclusive and reflective of the diverse roles and responsibilities held by members across the county. It included:

Workshops: These interactive sessions provided a forum for Councillors to discuss key themes such as vision and outcomes, governance structures, and neighbourhood-level decision-making. Discussions were guided by prompts around service priorities, local representation, and strategic planning.

Survey: A complementary survey was distributed to gather quantitative insights and broaden participation. It enabled members to express views on specific proposals, including the scope and remit of Neighbourhood Governance Bodies (NGBs), Councillor numbers, and urban-rural service needs.

This dual approach ensured both depth and breadth in member feedback, allowing the Council to identify common priorities, areas of concern, and opportunities for improvement. The findings have informed the development of governance models that aim to balance strategic oversight with local responsiveness, and to reflect the lived realities of communities across Nottinghamshire.

Key Insights from the Engagement

1. Vision and Outcomes

Focusing on improving core local services

- Building connected communities
- Schools and Education
- Tackling Antisocial behaviour
- Road Maintenance
- Housing
- Supporting local businesses
- Transport and Connectivity

One Nottingham Vision

- Building connected communities
- A chance to build Nottingham's reputation
- Metropolitan name discouraged
- Joined-up efficient services with residents at the centre
- Local identity and heritage

2. Governance

Number of Councillors and Structure

- Mixed views – some concerns around with reduced no of Cllrs and increased responsibilities
- Member support and opportunities for Town and Parish Councils

Town and Parish governance and operating models are varied. Consideration to be given on how best to give greater responsibilities reflecting these differences.

New structures could offer opportunity for community development teams

Opportunity to take on further responsibilities but with appropriate support and budgets

Service area scope of Neighbourhood Governance Bodies (NGBs)

- Focused on local level outcomes – parks and recreation, cultural heritage/ events, road maintenance.
- Involvement with partners – fire and police, EMCCA representatives, health (local health reps), Schools, Forest East Connect, NHS, ICB

Remit of Neighbourhood Governance Bodies (NGBs)

- NGBs to have their own budget, but NOT have an input into strategic vision and budget planning.
- To replicate the geographical design and structure of some existing forums that bring together rural areas.

Assessment of needs in the urban / city-based Council vs rural / county-based Council?

- Waste services – demand and needs are higher in urban.
- Housing – social housing issues and new developments in urban.

Member Engagement Survey insights

- Councillors' Common Activity
    - Resident feedback, stakeholder communication, social media, meetings, emails, community events.
    - Top Resident Issues
    - Clean streets, road maintenance, crime, transport, recycling, health services, housing and youth support.

- Engagement
    - Difficulty reaching older residents (digital) and young people (low participation).
    - Build better engagement through surgeries, meetings and digital offering

- Unitary Council Support
    - IT help, clear guidance, regular meetings.
    - Training for councillors

Workforce (Webinars, Workshops & Online Engagements – Viva Engage)

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of workforce perspectives on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), a multi-channel engagement strategy ~~e~~ continues. This approach captured a diverse range of views, concerns, and suggestions.

The methodology included:

Webinars: Facilitated by Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) speakers, these sessions provided a platform for staff to ask questions and receive direct responses on key aspects of LGR, including workforce implications, shared services, and governance structures.

Workshops: Themed engagement workshops focused on specific operational areas such as workforce culture, governance, technology, and neighbourhood services. These sessions encouraged collaborative dialogue and solution-focused discussions.

Online Engagements via Viva Engage: Digital platforms were used to extend participation, allowing staff to contribute asynchronously and share insights on proposed changes.

Other staff engagement exercises

Rushcliffe

- Webinar – Presentation by the Chief Executive on current position and updates since last session followed by question-and-answer session
- Email updates – Important information and developments in the LGR process as they happen, for example central government responses.
- Dedicated LGR information page on council intranet – includes timelines, webinar dates and session feedback, FAQs.
- Quarterly Leadership workshops engaging managers of different levels across the organisation

LGR focused workshops and groups

- A mixture of large workshops and smaller specialism focused and operational groups, involving district and county council colleagues, have gathered ideas and options for the future new unitaries.
- ‘The Hackathon’ which involved senior managers and service specialists exploring themes from vision and strategic opportunities, 1b model to implementation.
- Smaller specialism working groups of cross council colleagues focusing on specific service areas – democratic structure and neighbourhood governance, public protection and safety, people and resources, finance and 151 officer group, monitoring officer group.
- Core working group supporting continued collaboration and discussion among the nine Nottinghamshire councils through the continued LGR process. Implementing robust professional practices such as data sharing and governance.
- Operational update meetings of senior RBC managers progressing operational LGR activities, development of 1b option and sharing of knowledge and good practice from support events and training to inform and support the LGR process.
- Chief Executives meeting supporting continued collaboration and discussion among the 9 Nottinghamshire councils. Decision making and direction for continued collaborative areas of the LGR process.

NCC Workforce Webinar Insights

Questions Answered During the Webinar from CLT Speakers:

Q1. What happens if a decision is made to take forward an option other than 1b?
We will continue to work together so that we can make a success of whatever proposal is implemented and the best of Nottinghamshire.

Q2. What does LGR mean for the workforce?
Across the 9 Councils, there is a Notts HR Group who meet frequently and share best practice – strong connection over the partnership that will work together towards implementation planning.

Q3. What will the impact be for people who might currently have in their patch / patch they work in, Gedling or Broxtowe?
The new unitary aim to be outstanding in everything they do, including as an employer to whoever ends up working for them going forward.

Q4. What will shared services across the two new Councils look like?
There is a lot of work being done around what works and models around shared service delivery, NCC are open to opportunities this presents. Once we're at a point of structural changes order and putting transitional governance in place, it will be for elected members of the shadow authorities who will take decisions of what the future will look like.

Q5. Under Neighbourhoods, Place and Environment – there are 3 proposition areas listed and no reference to the 'natural environment' – will this be included?
We will replace some of our colleagues in district and borough Councils, whether it's more technical street place-based services relating to highways, transport, waste collection. There is real opportunity for us to get local and stay strategic.

Q6. Engagement / comms – Are there confirmed plans to publish the findings of the public consultation?
11,000 people responded to the public consultation and NCC aims to publish all relevant surveys/findings.

Workforce Engagement Workshop – Operating Model Insights

Workforce, Culture, Leadership & Management

Strengths:

- Strong resident – focused and committed workforce.
- Positive organisational culture with no blame culture.
- Accessible and visible leadership that sets clear priorities.
- Flexible working arrangements supporting wellbeing and talent attraction.
- Inclusive recruitment practices and staff networks.
- Autonomy in service delivery with senior leader support.
- Apprenticeship and graduate schemes seen as valuable.

Opportunities

- Strengthen partnership clarity and shared responsibilities.
- Develop integrated, multifunctional teams to address service gaps.
- Maintain local feel and community connection.
- Improve consistency in leadership messaging and matrix working.
- Streamline internal processes and enhance internal comms.
- Build inclusive leadership development and mentorship programmes.
- Treat workforce data holistically and improve talent retention strategies.

Governance, Democracy & Decision-Making

Strengths

- Delegated decision – making to officers enables quicker action
- Strong constitution and governance structures.
- Effective scrutiny embedded in report writing and processes.
- Responsive senior leadership and programme boards.
- Clear fallback structures and strategic oversight.

Opportunities

- Streamline senior decision-making and reduce bureaucracy.
- Clarify roles between officers and elected members.
- Improve public understanding and engagement in decision-making. Enhance transparency and communication around Council finances.
- Build inclusive governance with local representation.
- Improve internal clarity on governance routes and responsibilities.
- Strengthen Councillor-officer relationships and informal engagement.
- Address reputational challenges and promote new Council identity.
- Foster cross-departmental collaboration and reduce siloed working.
- Create central hubs for service queries and improve intranet usability.

Technology, Digital & Data

Strengths

- Good access to software, ICT support, and hybrid working infrastructure.
- Strong data governance and security.
- Responsive digital tools (e.g., Viva Engage), cloud migration, and accessibility features.
- Tactical workarounds by skilled workforce.
- Centralised information systems for staff and residents.

Opportunities

- Unify digital systems and centralise data access
- Improve collaboration tools and shared spaces for staff.
- Strengthen data protection frameworks and governance.
- Enhance digital inclusion, especially in rural areas.
- Develop a single, user-friendly website and complaints system.
- Align technology strategies across Councils and departments.
- Improve procurement processes and system integration.

- Embrace AI and enterprise architecture for smarter service delivery.
- Treat data as a strategic asset with a single source of truth.
- Plan now for system migration and business continuity.

Workforce Engagement Workshop – Neighbourhoods

Vision for Thriving Neighbourhoods

Themes:

Community-Centric Design: Services should be relevant, personal, and co-produced with residents. Emphasis on listening, trust-building, and regular presence in communities.

Holistic Wellbeing: Addressing education, employment, housing, transport, food access, and social cohesion.

Inclusivity & Equity: Ensure all groups (e.g. asylum seekers, migrants, SEND children) are included and supported.

Green & Safe Spaces: Investment in nature, clean environments, and accessible green areas.

Digital Inclusion: Tackle digital exclusion through hubs, devices, and training.

Community Resilience: Encourage mutual aid, volunteering, and neighbourly support.

Alignment with Existing Structures

Themes:

Hyperlocal Focus: Align services with local identities and needs, avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach.

Cross-Partner Collaboration: Better integration with schools, PCNs, police, and voluntary sectors.

Simplified Systems: Reduce confusion across Councils (e.g. school admissions, EHCPs), and improve communication.

Cultural & Structural Barriers: Address siloed working, historical rivalries, and inconsistent engagement.

Shared Infrastructure: Use community hubs, libraries, and GP surgeries as access points for services.

Data & Systems Integration: Improve interoperability between platforms (e.g. Mosaic, Synergy).

Outcomes of Neighbourhood Working

Themes:

Improved Access & Equity: Consistent service quality regardless of location; reduce postcode lottery.

Joined-Up Services: Holistic support through integrated teams and shared goals.

Health & Education: Focus on preventative care, mental health, school attainment, and life expectancy.

Community Hubs: Repurpose buildings for multi-agency use and local engagement.

Transport & Infrastructure: Better links to jobs, schools, and services, especially in rural areas.

Satisfaction & Safety: Track softer outcomes like community satisfaction and family safety.

Gaps & Considerations

Themes:

Public Consultation: Need for clearer, ongoing engagement and communication with residents.

System Change Risks: Concerns about job security, service continuity, and cultural resistance.

Funding & Competition: Avoiding competitive dynamics between areas; focus on collaboration.

Council Tax & Governance: Questions around future changes and clarity post-LGR (Local Government Reorganisation).

Adrian Smith's Leadership Viva Engage Insights

Weekly questions shared:

1. What are the characteristics or attributes of the Current Councils in Nottinghamshire that we should replicate in the new Councils we create?
2. If you had more say in what your council does in your community, what would you want to influence – and how?
3. What is / should be different in the urban / rural council?

Themes identified:

Difference in urban vs. rural council operations

- Service Delivery Concerns: Clarity, oversight and contact points.
- Decision – Making Preferences: Localised control and tailored priorities.
- Suggestions for Future Operations: Community – led initiatives and resource allocation.

Desired areas of influence:

- Key Areas of Influence: Waste strategy and community engagement.
- Preferred Engagement Methods: Online platforms, in-person meetings, feedback loops.
- Suggestions for Council Responsiveness: Hybrid engagement, priority setting, transparent performance tracking.

Favoured characteristics / attributes to be featured in the new Councils

- Valued attributes: Local presence, responsiveness, transparency.
- Examples of Good Practice: Community hubs, waste management, collaboration.
- Suggestions for Continuity: Retain local offices, preserve staff knowledge, maintain transparency.

Conclusion

The stakeholder engagement programme undertaken in support of the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal has provided a robust and inclusive evidence base to inform the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) proposals. Through extensive consultation with strategic partners, local communities, education leaders, the voluntary and community sector, young people, residents, and the Council’s workforce, a diverse range of perspectives has been captured.

The feedback highlights a shared commitment to preserving strong local relationships, ensuring equitable service delivery, and maintaining community identity amidst structural change. Stakeholders consistently emphasised the importance of transparent communication, fair funding, and inclusive governance that reflects both urban and rural needs. There is a clear appetite for reform that enhances efficiency, simplifies service access, and strengthens local voice and accountability.

This report demonstrates dedication to meaningful engagement and is responsive to the concerns and aspirations of Nottinghamshire’s communities. As the LGR process progresses, these insights will remain central to shaping a future governance model that is locally rooted, strategically aligned, and capable of delivering improved outcomes for all.

Rushcliffe Borough Council and Nottinghamshire County Council:

Member Engagement Summary

Contents

Introduction

A comprehensive member engagement programme has been undertaken by Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) and Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC) to inform the development of the proposal for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Nottinghamshire. This programme was designed to be inclusive and reflective of the diverse roles and responsibilities held by councillors across the county and borough.

The engagement activities included:

- **NCC Structured Workshops**: Two cross-party Member working sessions were held on 17 and 21 October. All County Councillors were invited to attend. 31 County Councillors from the Reform Group and Labour Group attended the sessions. These sessions explored key themes such as vision and outcomes, governance structures, and neighbourhood-level decision-making. Discussions were guided by prompts around service priorities, local representation, and strategic planning.

- **NCC Targeted Survey**: 16 Councillors responded to a targeted survey. Their responses provide insights into councillor time commitments, community engagement practices, local priorities, and support needs. Members also shared views on the scope and remit of Neighbourhood Public Service Committees (NPSCs), councillor numbers, and urban-rural service differences.

- **RBC Member Engagement Survey**: 13 Councillors responded to an engagement survey. The responses identified what support and structures are needed to ensure local voices continue to shape decision making.

- **RBC Town & Parish Councillors Engagement Survey**: Following a dedicated town and parish council forum session on 3rd October, Councillors responded to an engagement survey. The responses identified what support and structures are needed to ensure local voices continue to shape decision making.

- **RBC Cross-Party Member Engagement Session**: On 14 October, all Rushcliffe Borough Council members were invited to an interactive workshop, attended by 30 councillors representing the Independents, Labour, Liberal Democrats, Green Party, and Conservatives. The session was shaped around key questions regarding vision, outcomes and neighbourhood governance.

- **RBC Town and Parish Forum**: on 3rd October all Rushcliffe Town and Parish Councillors and clerks were invited to an interactive workshop. The session was shaped around key questions regarding responsibilities, support, risks and preparation.

- **NCC Overview and Scrutiny**: The Corporate Leadership Team and 13 Committee Members participated in an Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to discuss the LGR proposal. Members were invited to contribute feedback on the vision for future governance, service delivery priorities, and structural considerations for the new council model.

- **RBC/NCC Joint Member Session**: Joint RBC/NCC and Ashfield District Council Member session.

- **RBC Corporate Overview Group**: on 18th November the Council's Corporate Overview Group considered the governance process surrounding the approval of the LGR Submission, opportunities for member engagement, and the establishment of a member working group.

This multi-channel approach ensured both depth and breadth in member feedback, enabling the Council to identify common priorities, understand councillor perspectives, and shape proposals that balance strategic oversight with local responsiveness.

We thank the councillors who participated in this engagement. Their insights have helped shape a clearer understanding of the support needed to sustain and strengthen their work. Their contributions continue to build stronger, more inclusive communities across Nottinghamshire.

Summary of key themes

1. Vision and Outcomes

- Councillors strongly support a vision that places **residents at the heart of service delivery**, promotes **connected communities**, and delivers **joined-up, efficient services**.
- Priorities include **core local services** such as education, housing, transport, road maintenance, and tackling antisocial behaviour.
- Feedback emphasized the need for **plain English**, authenticity, and recognition of financial realities to ensure credibility.

2. Governance

- Mixed views on reducing councillor numbers; concerns about increased responsibilities and maintaining accessibility for residents.
- Calls for **streamlined governance structures** to avoid duplication and bureaucracy.
- Strong emphasis on integrating **Town and Parish Councils** within neighbourhood governance models while preserving democratic representation and local identity.

3. Neighbourhood Governance

- Broad support for **local-level decision-making** and dedicated budgets for Neighbourhood Governance Bodies (NGBs).
- Opportunities for Town and Parish Councils to take on greater responsibilities, provided adequate **resources, training, and officer support** are in place.
- Need for clarity on roles, accountability, and avoiding overly complex structures.

4. Community Engagement

- Councillors see themselves as **connectors between councils and communities**.
- Recommendations include **dedicated engagement teams**, improved IT support, physical spaces for interaction, and unified digital platforms.
- Emphasis on inclusive engagement, particularly for underrepresented and digitally excluded groups.

5. Resident Priorities

- Common issues raised by residents: **road and pavement maintenance**, **antisocial behaviour**, **public transport**, and **clean streets**.
- Additional priorities include housing, youth initiatives, support for vulnerable groups, and improved community facilities.

6. Support and Resources for Councillors

- Councillors request **training**, **peer learning**, **administrative assistance**, and **access to local data**.
- Additional needs include IT support, operational guidance, and increased allowances to reflect time demands.

7. Future Needs and Recommendations

- Maintain **local voices** through elected representation and accessible engagement channels.
- Ensure **devolution of powers** is matched with resources and accountability.
- Avoid overly bureaucratic models; keep governance **streamlined and community-focused**.

This summary reflects a consistent desire for **effective, locally responsive governance**, **clear communication**, and **adequate support structures** to enable councillors to serve their communities effectively during and after the LGR transition.

NCC Member Engagement Workshops feedback

Vision and Outcomes

Members' focus was on opportunities to improve core services such as transport and connectivity, housing and social care, and to ensure they are designed with the resident at heart. Key issues to address are schools and education, tackling anti-social behaviour, road maintenance and supporting local businesses. They were keen that there is a collective vision across the councils and that this is a chance to rebuild Nottingham City Council's reputation. Local identity and heritage is an important consideration when developing the new councils.

Governance

Members support the development of connected communities. They expressed support for Neighbourhood Public Service Committees (NPSCs) working alongside existing Town and Parish Councils, and greater focus on community voice. They think that NPSCs should focus on local level outcomes - parks and recreation, cultural heritage/ events, road maintenance – and that they should develop working relationships with partners such as Fire and Police services, EMCCA representatives, Health (local health reps, NHS, ICB), Schools and education providers. They are keen for NPSCs to manage their own budgets but do not feel that they should be involved in strategic vison and budget planning. They noted that renewed local focus could offer opportunity for community development teams.

They noted the different needs in the largely urban council as opposed to the largely rural council, with examples such as waste services and housing.

There were mixed views regarding Councillor numbers and the impact on responsibilities; some concerns about reduced number of Councillors but also potential to increase responsibility with appropriate support and budgets.

NCC Member Engagement Survey feedback

Introduction

This report summarises the findings from a targeted survey distributed to Nottinghamshire County Council members, focusing on their time commitments, community engagement practices, collaboration with local stakeholders, and views on future support. 16 Councillors responded to the survey.

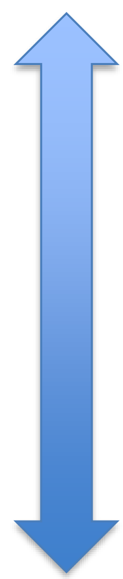
Summary of responses

The majority of Councillors' time is taken up with communication and engagement activity, be that answering emails and feedback from residents, local groups and stakeholders, and participating in council meetings and liaison.

The top three issues or priorities heard most often from residents are, in priority order:

- Maintaining roads and pavements
- Tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing crime
- Public transport, roads and parking
- Keeping streets and public areas clean and tidy
- Regeneration of town centres/high streets
- Parks, sports and leisure facilities
- Support/services for older people and vulnerable groups
- Health services and promoting healthy lifestyles
- Decent and affordable homes
- Encouraging community cohesion
- Jobs and supporting people into work
- Activities/facilities for children and young people
- Road safety (speed limits, signage, markings, etc.)
- Schools and places of learning
- Uncontrolled immigration
- Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)
- Community events and supporting local groups

Heard most often



Heard least often

Councillors were asked what would help them to improve engagement and communication with residents and groups such as young people, older people and under-represented communities, and what other support would help them be more effective as a councillor:

- Better advertising of outreach centres
- Dedicated engagement teams
- More physical spaces for interaction
- Improved IT and operational support
- Childcare options and Police interaction
- PA/assistant or Officer support
- Structured communication channels

- Access to local data and updates
- Training on communication tools
- Peer learning and mentoring
- Dedicated assistants or PAs
- Improved officer communication
- Local council offices and meeting spaces

Councillors were asked for an example of how they feel they make a real difference in their community:

- Advocacy & Support: Councillors have actively supported vulnerable individuals, including securing placements for children needing social services and opposing harmful planning proposals.
- Local Improvements: Actions taken include relocating speed limit signs, resolving long-standing issues with community buildings, and addressing anti-social behaviour through collaboration with housing authorities.
- Community Engagement: Councillors have organized inclusive events, supported local groups, and maintained strong visibility and responsiveness within their communities.
- Collaboration: Effective partnerships with Parish Councils and First Responders have enhanced local service delivery and community cohesion.

Councillors were asked what types of projects they would prioritise if they had a larger local budget to support the community:

- Support for Vulnerable Groups: Increased engagement with elderly residents, children, and SEND families through activities, clubs, and tailored services.
- Youth Initiatives: Investment in youth clubs, skill-based social groups, and life-enhancing experiences for young people.
- Infrastructure & Environment: Calls for better public transport, pavement repairs, flood prevention, and cleaner, safer streets.
- Community Facilities: Proposals for a one-stop help centre, enhanced green spaces, and improved community hubs.
- Funding & Investment: Strategic use of Community Development Funds (CDF) and recognition of the need for additional resources beyond CDF for local clubs and services.
- Community Cohesion: Support for events that bring generations together and celebrate local traditions and holidays.
- Safety & Engagement: Desire for more police interaction and projects to reduce antisocial behaviour.

Councillors who had experience of working in district, borough or city councils were asked what works well:

There was limited feedback to this question. One respondent emphasized the importance of keeping councillors informed about local service delivery. A councillor's use of a departmental email 'drop-box' system was praised for improving enquiry handling and building relationships with council officers. One respondent noted improved scrutiny in the absence of personal agendas from specific political groups. One respondent expressed scepticism about Mansfield District Council's ability to influence Nottinghamshire County Council.

Councillors were asked what one change would most improve how they connect with residents in the future unitary councils, and what support and resources they will need:

- Dedicated community engagement days
- Local offices with parking and assistants
- Unified digital platforms
- Locality boards for structured engagement
- Better integration with Parish/Town Councils

Supported by

- IT support and operational guidance
- Regular informal meetings
- Councillor ‘buddy’ systems
- Administrative assistance
- Training on governance models
- Increased allowances for time demands

RBC Member Engagement workshop feedback

Vision

1. What elements of the vision really resonate with you?

- The focus on citizens at the heart of service delivery strongly resonated.
- The mention of heritage and a connected region were well received.
- The vision's aspirational intent was appreciated, particularly its emphasis on joined-up, efficient service delivery.
- The inclusion of arts and culture in both visions was viewed positively.
- Both visions should express integration and collaboration, bringing councils together to deliver seamless public services.
- A potential unifying strapline, such as "Bringing Services Together to Serve You Better," could help communicate this shared ambition.

2. Which bits of the vision will best resonate with communities, businesses, and key stakeholders?

- A clear emphasis on delivering effective, value-for-money services will resonate most strongly.
- Residents and businesses will appreciate joined-up and tailored services that reflect local needs.
- For the city unitary, the focus should be on economic development and innovation; for the rural unitary, on environmental stewardship, heritage, and protecting traditional communities.
- The phrase "a great place to live" should be included in the rural council's wording.
- Communities will respond positively to a vision that demonstrates authenticity, accessibility, and plain English.
- Reference to digital enablement is welcome, but it must be balanced with support for those who are not digitally confident.
- A vision that recognises the role of councillors in engagement and decision-making will carry more credibility.
- Local identity matters, both councils should reflect civic traditions (e.g., Lord Mayor, High Sheriff, Mayoral references) across the whole county, not confined to one area.

3. Is there anything missing?

- The vision currently feels too generic, removing "Nottingham and Nottinghamshire" would make it difficult to tell where it applies.
- It risks reading like a sales brochure: polished but lacking substance or local resonance.
- The financial reality of the current context should be acknowledged, aspirations must appear credible given public concern about the city's financial state.
- The vision should emphasise delivering services effectively for the public rather than organisational change.
- Hyper-local representation terminology did not land well; plain English alternatives are needed.
- The urban vision feels overly Nottingham-centric, while the rural version lacks ambition. Both should demonstrate how they will connect and complement each other.
- Consider renaming:

    - Urban → **Metropolitan** (reflecting mixed urban/rural areas).
    - Rural → **Town and Country** (instead of “Suburban”).
- The language and tone risk alienating rural communities, particularly Rushcliffe, if the city is positioned too prominently.
- Stronger reference to environmental sustainability and active travel infrastructure (cycling, walking, e-scooters) is needed.
- Include councillor engagement and community input, currently light in the vision.
- Plain English and clarity should replace overly corporate phrasing.
- Ensure shared straplines and wording to reflect a common purpose and service model between both unitaries.
- Vision should recognise that in theory savings may exist, but in practice communication and coordination costs could rise.
- The risk remains that residents may see this as “moving the deck chairs” rather than meaningful reform.
- The human element and personal touch must not be lost under a larger, more remote structure.
- Ensure references to civic traditions (Lord Mayor, High Sheriff) are used correctly and reflect county-wide significance.

Neighbourhood Governance exploring links with Town and Parish Councils and the local voice.

1. How can you in your role act as conduit to best support town and parishes on their LGR journey?

- Recognition that town and parish structures, governance and operating models are varied across the borough. Consideration to be given on how best to engage and give greater responsibilities reflecting these differences.
- Members can serve as connectors between unitaries and parishes, facilitating two-way communication and co-design of local services
- New structures could include area action partnerships or community development teams to embed localism.
- Training and capacity-building support, potentially led by district or borough teams, should strengthen local capability.

2. What are the opportunities for town and parishes to take on greater responsibilities under new governance arrangements?

- Opportunities exist for parishes to manage local parks, open spaces, leisure, planning in some circumstances, and community events, but only if resources, funding, and officer support are provided.
- Some town and parish councils lack the capacity or experience to take on new responsibilities, e.g., expanding the lengthsman service is currently difficult.
- Devolution must come with budget and officer support, not simply the transfer of responsibilities.
- Address the shortage of trained clerks and the lack of remuneration that currently limits local council effectiveness.
- Unitary resources should be deployed locally to assist town and parish councils.

- New models must avoid becoming overly bureaucratic.
- Clarify what “greater responsibilities” truly means, particularly around planning powers and service delivery.
- *Desired Outcomes:*
    - Statutory services delivered effectively and economically.
    - Non-statutory services protected and enhanced where headroom allows.
    - Easy access to core services at a local level.
- *How can the integrity of town and parish councils be maintained and enhanced?*
    - Town and parish councils must be properly resourced, trained, and supported to remain credible and effective.
    - Membership must be strengthened, resolve allowances, avoid co-opting, attract quality and quantity of councillors.
    - Clerks should be adequately paid and professionally supported.
    - Councils should remain democratically elected and formally constituted, avoiding symbolic or tokenistic roles.
    - Consider modernising terminology: “Neighbourhood Council” or “Community Council” may encourage wider participation.
    - Avoid replacing existing councils with area committees; these should complement, not duplicate or undermine, existing governance.
    - Ensure devolution of budgets and powers is matched with accountability and regulatory oversight.
    - Maintain each area’s local identity and civic traditions.
    - Communication between parishes, unitaries, and the combined authority must be structured and consistent.
    - Recognise that some parishes currently exist only on paper or lack participation, build a realistic support framework for sustainability.

3. What are the best ways to ensure local voices are still heard?

- Local representation must remain elected, not based on unelected “stakeholder” forums.
- Introduce or retain Area Planning Committees to ensure planning remains locally informed.
- Encourage public engagement through surgeries, meetings, and accessible digital channels (with support for the digitally excluded).
- Maintain single-member wards where possible to sustain community connection.
- Clarify language, residents identify with their neighbourhood and village, but not larger administrative layers.
- Ensure smaller villages are not overshadowed within broader governance structures.
- Build a culture of engagement, encouraging regular public participation in local decision-making.

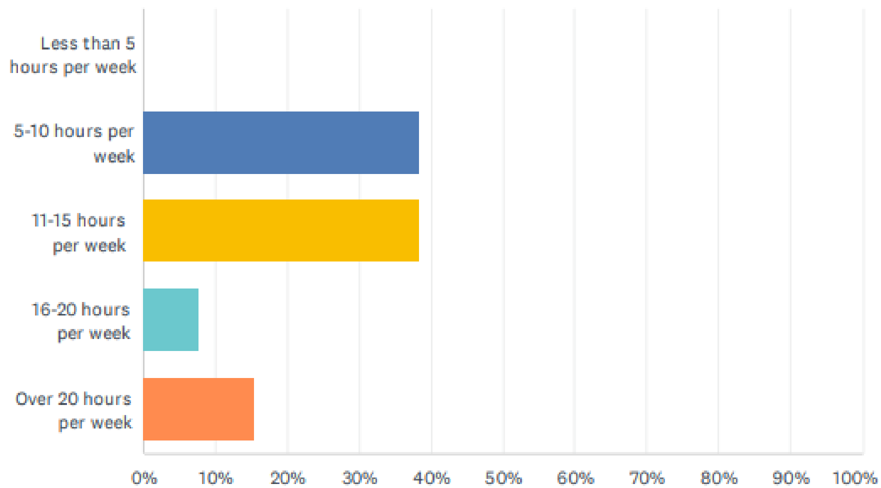
RBC Member Engagement Survey feedback

Survey Responses

Member engagement in your communities

Q1 On average, how many hours per week do you dedicate to your Rushcliffe Borough Council councillor role?

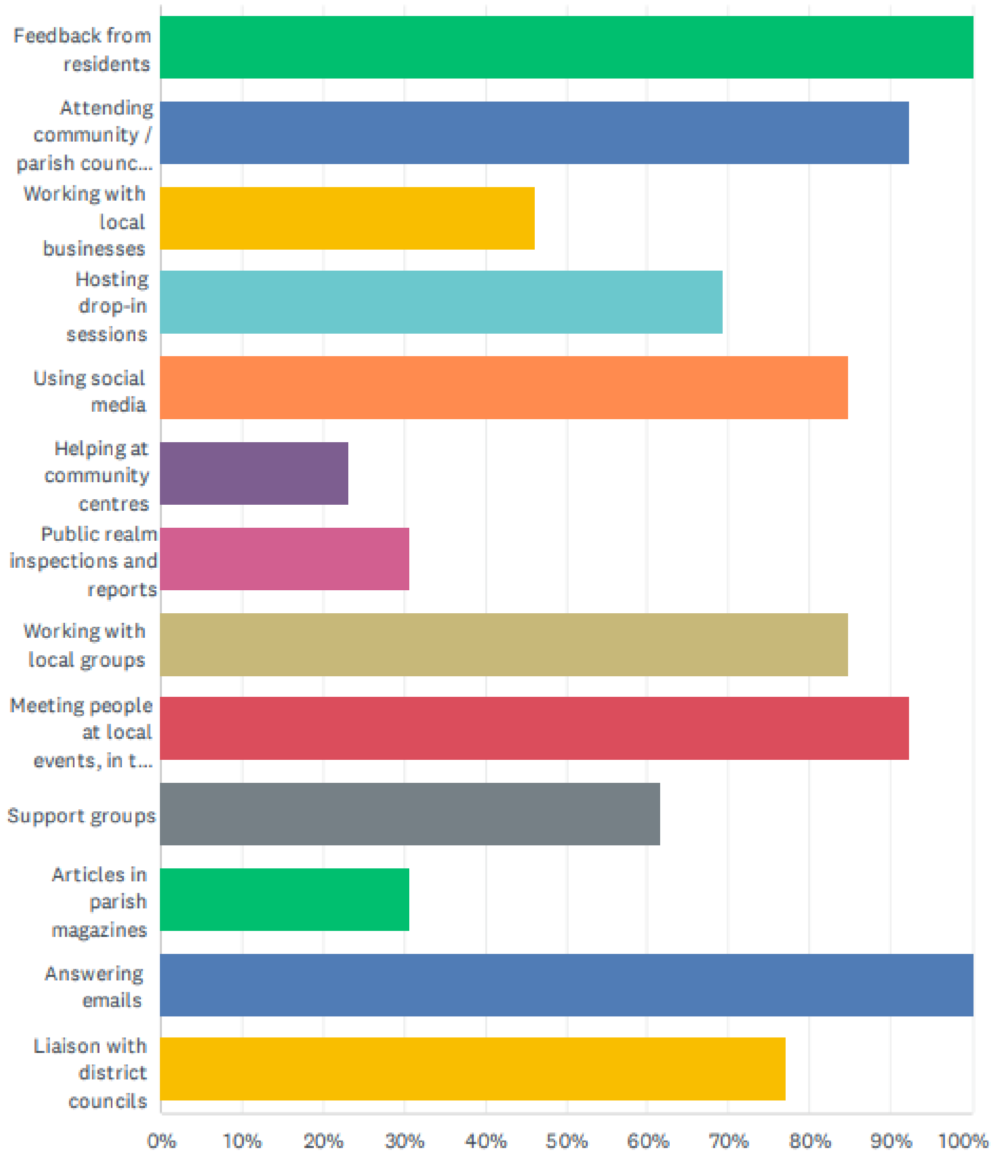
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 5 hours per week	0.00%	0
5-10 hours per week	38.46%	5
11-15 hours per week	38.46%	5
16-20 hours per week	7.69%	1
Over 20 hours per week	15.38%	2
TOTAL		13

Q2 Which of the following activities do you carry out in your local area?

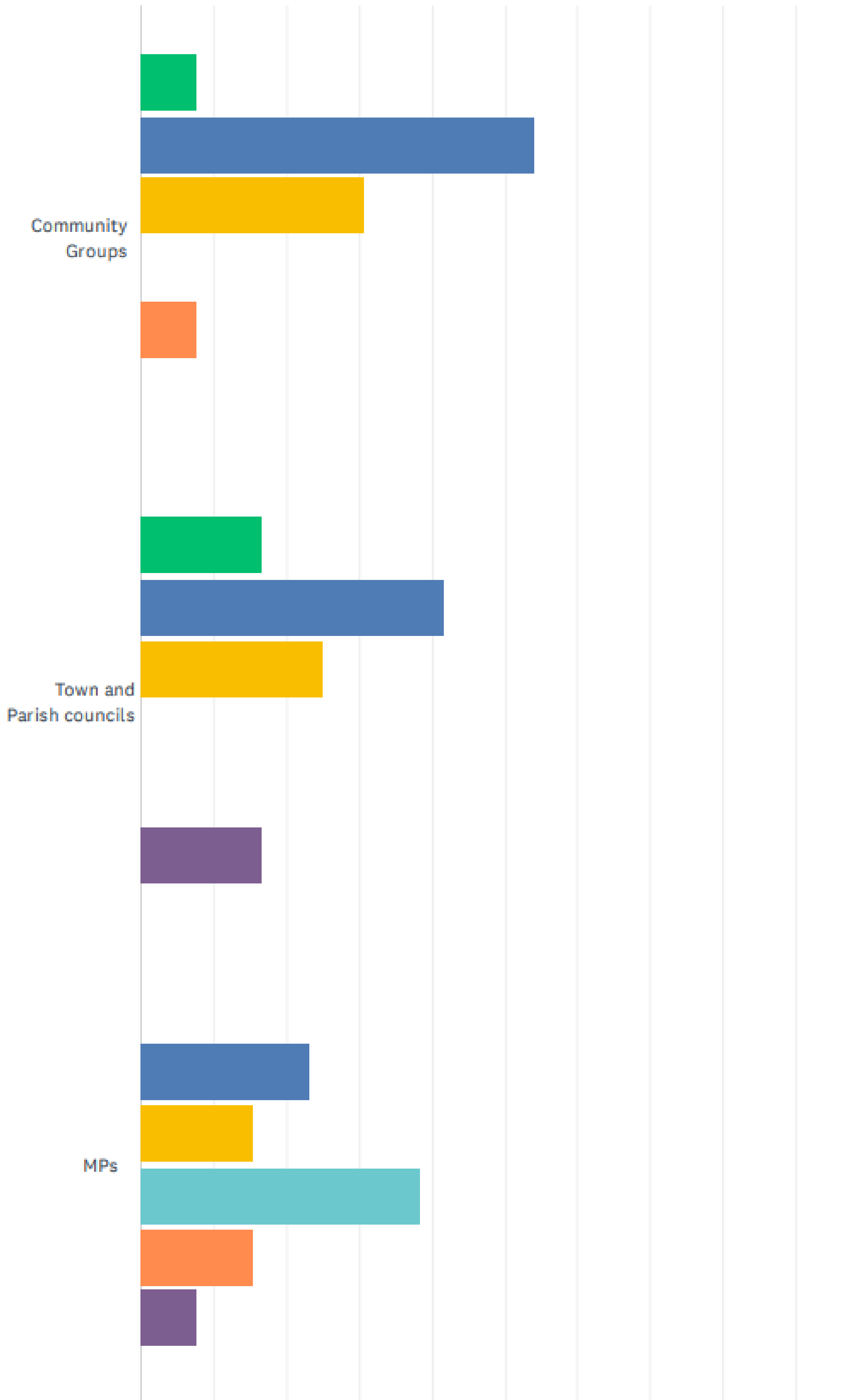
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

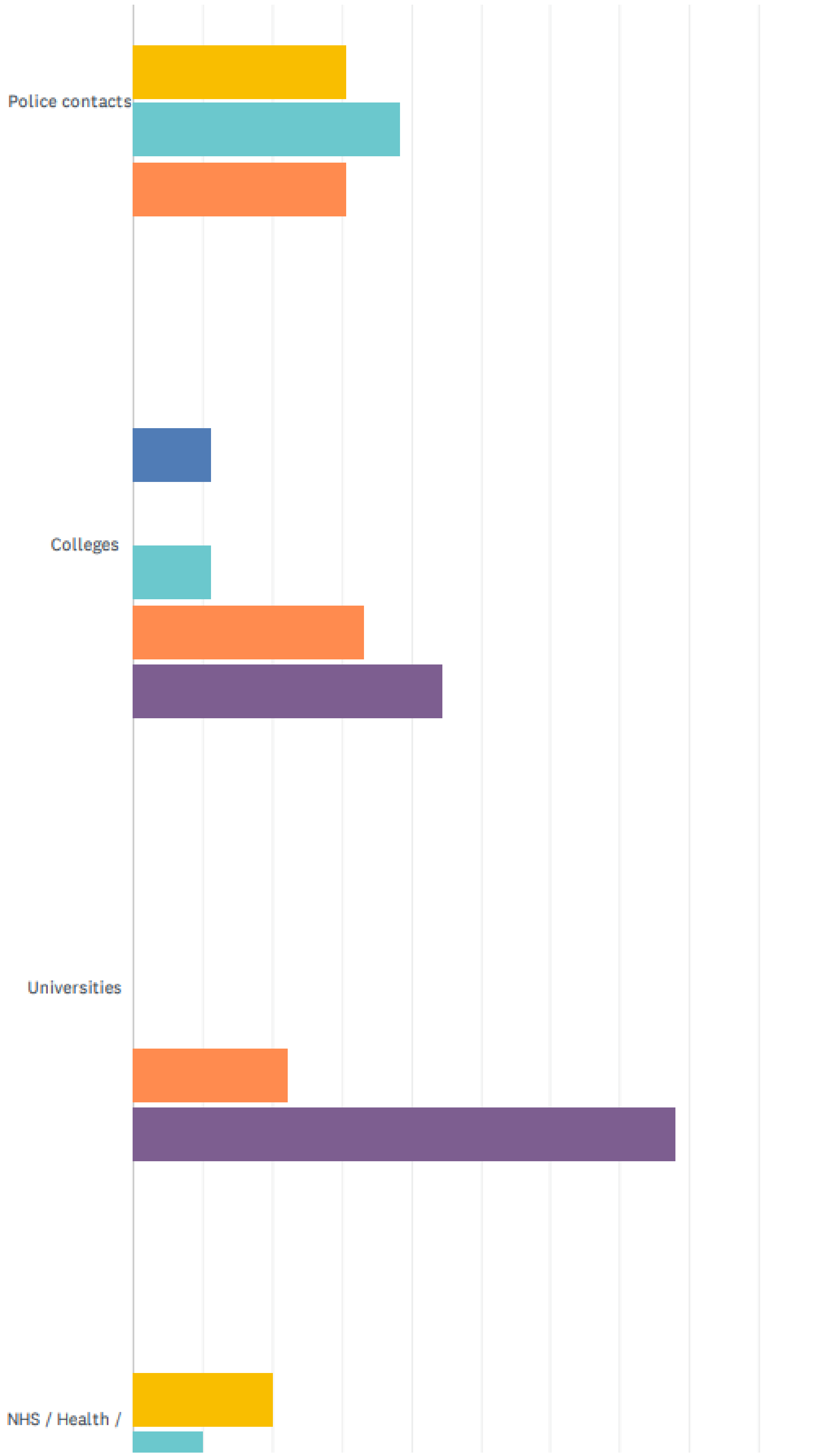


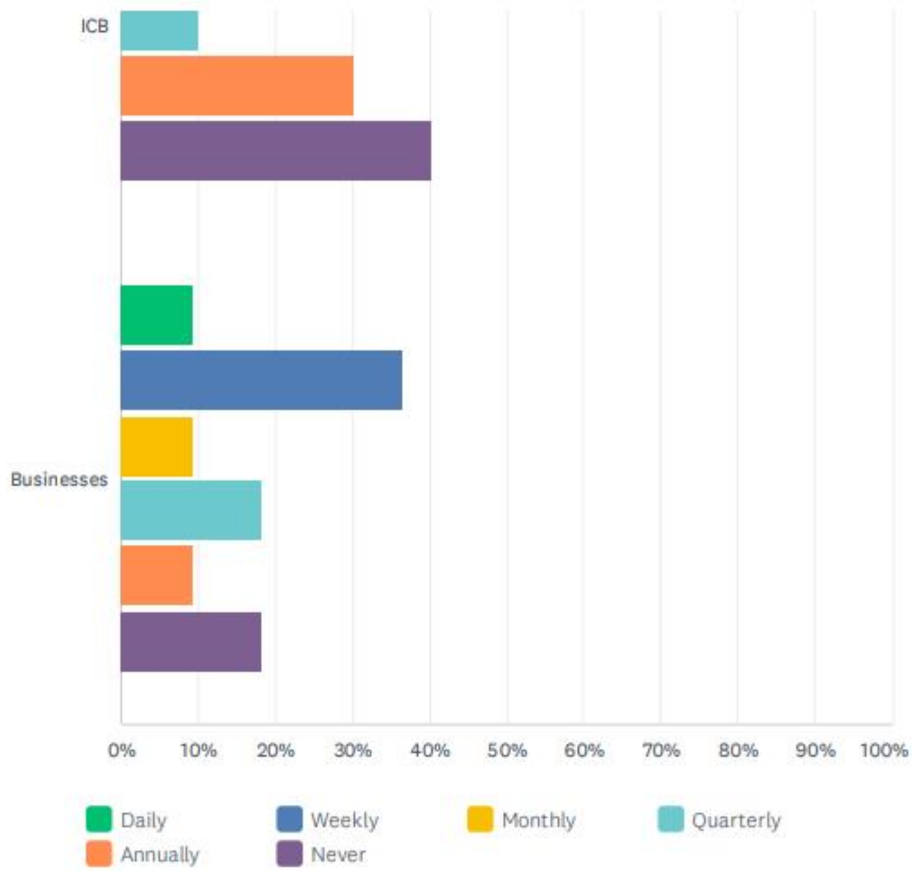
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Feedback from residents	100.00%	13
Attending community / parish council meetings	92.31%	12
Working with local businesses	46.15%	6
Hosting drop-in sessions	69.23%	9
Using social media	84.62%	11
Helping at community centres	23.08%	3
Public realm inspections and reports	30.77%	4
Working with local groups	84.62%	11
Meeting people at local events, in the streets and working with charities	92.31%	12
Support groups	61.54%	8
Articles in parish magazines	30.77%	4
Answering emails	100.00%	13
Liaison with district councils	76.92%	10
Total Respondents: 13		

Q3 How often do you engage with the following?

Answered: 13   Skipped: 0




Police contacts
Colleges
Universities
NHS / Health /



	DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	QUARTERLY	ANNUALLY	NEVER	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Community Groups	7.69% 1	53.85% 7	30.77% 4	0.00% 0	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	13	2.46
Town and Parish councils	16.67% 2	41.67% 5	25.00% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	16.67% 2	12	2.75
MPs	0.00% 0	23.08% 3	15.38% 2	38.46% 5	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	13	3.69
Police contacts	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	30.77% 4	38.46% 5	30.77% 4	0.00% 0	13	4.00
Colleges	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	33.33% 3	44.44% 4	9	5.00
Universities	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	77.78% 7	9	5.78
NHS / Health / ICB	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 2	10.00% 1	30.00% 3	40.00% 4	10	4.90
Businesses	9.09% 1	36.36% 4	9.09% 1	18.18% 2	9.09% 1	18.18% 2	11	3.36

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY WHO AND HOW FREQUENTLY)	DATE
1	Residents weekly or more	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	There is no not applicable option here but the area I represent is not parished and there are no	11/5/2025 12:25 AM

	nearby colleges or universities	
3	Residents - in touch on a daily basis	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
4	Sheltered accommodation - residents meetings -bi monthly	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
5	voluntary groups twice a year	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
6	N/A	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q4 What are the top three issues or priorities you hear most often from residents?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	need for new health centre ASB, young people and inconsiderate parking increased traffic levels, roads (potholes), speeding	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Parking ASB Pot-holes	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	VAT on Small Businesses, abandoned houses on Ruddington Green & traffic/lack of parking.	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Forest Football parking Planning Local Natural Environment	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	Planning, roads, canal,	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	Transportation- bus service and rat run& speeding issues Planning issues - numerous Mix - flooding, social problems, vegetation issues,etc	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
7	Development concerns; anti-social behaviour; roads/pavements	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
8	Need for a new Health Centre in the village Recycling Flooding	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
9	State of the roads, rural environmental issues, this being a Rural Ward, Planning, litter and fly tipping.	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
10	Noise from bars, planning concerns, environmental issues, issues with registered providers, state of the pavements, parking issues from Forest matches, bins on pavements.	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
11	space for the new bins Why are we reorganising as it works well as it is and no one wants bigger authorities concerns about HMOs' and the impact on immediate neighbours	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
12	Planning Issues including potential breach of contract by developers (especially within Sharphill wood new developmenr, Housig Allocation Scheme/Banding, Street wise issue/maintenance. But I have been contacted for issues outside the statutory duties of RBC (such Pension Funding, Ethical investment, role of councillors to support peace and conflict resolution, winter fuel allowance...	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
13	Planning Issues Council Tax Local Government Reorganisation	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q5 What would help you engage more effectively with residents? In particular, what support, if any, would help you engage with specific groups, such as young people, older people and underrepresented communities?

Answered: 12   Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Funding for health centre and places for young people to go. it is important that when we need to report problems e.g. issues with rented housing, that officers are willing and able to offer advice and sources of help.	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Not having a day job to be able to attend events and go around the town during the week day.	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	Help getting out communications and the work we are doing to our residents. The focus on Cabinet members does mean some our work locally doesn't get advertised, which is a shame.	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Having more time!	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	It would help if officers were more community minded rather authority driven	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	Nothing comes to mind other than having more available time to do so.	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
7	Information leaflets / web materials on particular topics to give to residents / direct them to	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
8	More understanding of community issues and public/communities in general by council officers. Too often answers from council officer are generic and do not relate to live situations	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
9	A comprehensive guide to voluntary community support groups within my ward.Also knowledge of supported housing for residents with learning disabilities. Clearer lines of communication with registered providers. Improved responses - or any response from Severn Trent!	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
10	I currently produce a twice a year newsletter for my ward which produces a flurry of responses. This takes time and resources to produce and deliver to households.	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
11	A vibrant democratic participatory youth and children's council with cross communication with full council and RBC officers and councillors. Dispersing decision making with neighbourhoods and residents assemblies. Opening up council's decision making bodies and encourage participation engagement. Proactively engage with local trade unions, tenants associations, refugeee forums, BAME and LGBT, disability networks and elavate their voices and political prioritisations.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
12	Holding dedicated meetings at the Arena or local venues in wards to discuss certain topics or areas/issues of concern	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q6 What is one example of a time you felt you made a real difference in community?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Working with MTVH and their contractors to help residents whose homes were being refurbished and it was not going well. Helping residents of managed estates to start to form residents associations to challenge injustices from council, managing agents/companies and developers.	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Getting a new play area built	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	Helped a communication breakdown between a resident & Metropolitan.	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Helping people with planning and housing	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	Winning for the community on a very controversial planning appeal hearing	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	When I tried to help with the school bus service and lack of seatbelts When I run surgeries and speak with people	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
7	Raising issue of fly-tipping further up the agenda resulting in RBC's partnership with Wise.	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
8	Getting support structures out in place to prevent glass recycling bins (x 13 of them) tipping over and shedding broken glass across Co-op car park every time the car park floods - 2-3 times per year	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
9	Engaging with the community and successfully Fighting a planning appeal at full enquiry. Also putting across resident concerns re road safety and getting speed limit and road marking altered.	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
10	Setting up a friends group to save Lutterell hall from demolition.	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
11	canvasing views on the reduced bus timetable and sending a petition to the bus company to request the number of buses increase. This eventually with follow up got the increase requested.	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
12	When I supported a 72 year old transwoman, who was handed a section 21 no fault eviction note to vacate a property she has been living for 17 years with all that it entails (losing a social network of support) to apply for social housing and be housed in an area within close proximity with her last accommodation.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
13	Supporting local community groups	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q7 If funding was available to support local communities, what types of local projects would you prioritise?

Answered: 13   Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	New health centre Facilities for young people, e.g. teen café Refurbish the village centre to make it more attractive	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	to build community infrastructure, be physical and help groups that get people together so they feel apart of the community.	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	Youth provision and the rebuilding of community assets. In Ruddington that would be our Community Centre.	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Active travel/road safety infrastructure Street planting Public transport provision Waste reduction	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	Community transport however in my area the canal	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	Woodland and land maintenance Social activities	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
7	Anything that supports volunteers and groups providing community-focused work/opprtunities.	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
8	Traffic calming through East and West Leake main streets Setting up a fully-funded youth club or drop in service further environmental improvements to housing stock	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
9	In general engagement with young people in schools so they understand the real world, where they fit in, employment opportunities and how they can make a difference - This is their world, their future. In my Ward reinstatement of the Grantham Canal as of beneficial use in Rushcliffe for Leisure, Health and environment.	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
10	A project that mapped local support services already in the community and brought voluntary/ community groups together to prevent repetition and address gaps. More support for young mums and carers.	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
11	I currently support local voluntary groups which need funding for equipment. so gardening projects and signage for projects	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
12	Local trade unions, especially those unionising hospitality workers and those with intersectional marginalised identities. With emphasis on casualised almost forgotten workforce such as Uber drivers, deliveroo workers. Ensuring every comer of our Borough has unioninised living wage employees with safe, secure emplyment and decent terms and conditions. Tenants associations as the guarantors of safe, accessible, affordable housing (meeting the diverse needs of our community addressing cultural issues, different perceptual systems, functional abilities, age ranges, linguistic diversity, workers, retired, students, unemployed, refugess) Food banks, refugee forums, mutual aid networks, regenerative care Setting up primary school children's council/forums, re invirogare young people's council, setting up citizen's assemblies	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
13	Dementia Support Ethnic Community Support Groups	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q8 If you are a parish councillor what support do you receive from Nottinghamshire Association of Local Council (NALC)?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 3

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	none	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Access to the training courses and newsletters	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	N/A	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	N/A	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	I am but none directly. They do support the zpC generally	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
6	NA	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
7	Not used their resources	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
8	N/A	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
9	NA.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
10	N/A	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q9 What support, if any, would help you be more effective as a councillor?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	see question 5	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Being able to have more time and social media.	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	Help with promoting us on all media channels.	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Admin support	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	A better understanding by officers of communities and place. Everything is not necessarily 'black and white' no two places are the same	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	NA	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
7	Clear, timely briefings when asked for	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
8	Relevant face to face training - not generic tick box training, which is not training at all simply dictation - not usually relevant	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
9	More support in dealing with case work.	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
10	being with other councillors other than just in meetings I am the only Lib dem so I am not included in the leaders briefings so I don't always know what is happening.	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
11	To be more effective as a councillor, I need support that strengthens collective, participatory forms of governance. The most valuable support would be structural , creating time, space, and institutional legitimacy for citizens' assemblies, neighbourhood forums, and community co-operatives to shape policy directly. Dedicated community development officers to help organise and facilitate assemblies, ensuring inclusion of tenants, young people, and marginalised groups. Training and coordination spaces with local trade unions, tenant associations, and voluntary sector groups to co-design policy, monitor service delivery, and ensure accountability to everyday realities. Ensuring decisions are co-owned by communities and that councillors act as facilitators of democratic life.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
12	Regular Officer Support, not only when requested which is very helpful but perhaps one-to-one contact points in each directorate to share issues or solicit additional support	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q10 If you are also a County Councillor, what support do you receive from County that works well and that we could learn from?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 5

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	n/a	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	N/A	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
3	N/A	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
4	N/A	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
5	NA	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
6	N/A	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
7	NA.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
8	N/A	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q11 What one change would most improve how councillors connect with residents in the future unitary council(s)?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Local committees that can be the link between these overlarge, remote organisations. The role of borough councillors is to be that link and it will be lost.	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Better presence on social media	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	Less political bias on media channels	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Proportional representation	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	Maintaining local councillors familiar with their area who can liaise face to face. In many cases there is room for vast improvement. Residents still need councillor input to understand complex application processes imposed by authorities we are now being driven by outside consultants and imposed inflexible software	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	Being able to do a quarterly newsletter by social media or direct signnups	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
7	Electing good Councillors.	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
8	Dedicated space for Cllrs to host drop-ins - plus increased allowance to make up for lost work time	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
9	I am afraid there will be little or no councillor connection with residents - cost savings will ultimately lead to chatbot contact. I am very much a face to face councillor and work closely with my communities - this will all go!	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
10	The unitary authority would be responsible for all public services provided which would simplify things for residents and councillors alike.	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
11	More understanding of the day to day functions of work streams. I attend a cil group but how they get to the decisions they want confirming in meetings isn't clear. Some aspects of the councils functions are still mysterious. residents want their say at planning committee where there is concerns about an application	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
12	Setting up of open forum's and people's assemblies, so we are embedded in our areas/neighborhoods/communities. Creating a link to deliberate on commumity groups priorities/campaigning issues.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
13	Closer 'on the ground' ward support for residents...the future unitary councils will create a vacuum between councillors appreciating local issues and a more centralised structure	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q12 What types of support and resources do you believe councillors will need to effectively serve their communities in the new unitary council(s)?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Access to named officers of the new councils. Officers with responsibility for particular areas so that they gain a more comprehensive understanding of the local issues. This new system has the potential to become remote from the reality of the communities.	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Social media training and understanding to use effectively.	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	Good communication and involvement in the all new systems and policies from the beginning.	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Town council in West Bridgford so that local democracy is not lost	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	More face to face liaison with residents and council officers less tick box regime. We deliver services to humane being not robots	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	Better allowance so can spend more time sorting out issues for people Training to understand how all the different service provisions work	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
7	It's all about understanding the decision making structure. Helping people to understand who is making a particular decsion and how. The 'soft power' stuff.	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
8	Open, transparent information - without political spin - a decent, accessible website that is easy to navigate, has the right info presented in easy bitesize chunks. Keep localism at the fore - not centralised and distant - officers who know the area and can respond with a good depth of knowledge	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
9	As above - The personal councillor who knows their patch will ultimately go. All very worrying.	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
10	Better training and more admin support from officers. More focus on case-work and how best to support residents with often complex issues.	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
11	More councillors. The new councils will give each councillor a much bigger area to cover. I am not going to stand as a result of the changes.	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
12	Under a new unitary structure, councillors risk becoming even more remote from the people they represent unless deliberate measures are taken to devolve power downward. To serve communities effectively, councillors will need: 1. Institutional frameworks for participatory democracy, formal recognition and resourcing of citizens' assemblies, ward-level budgets, and co-decision structures that give residents real authority over spending, planning, and service priorities. 2. Local infrastructure for collaboration, physical and digital spaces where councillors, NGOs, unions, tenants, and residents can meet regularly to deliberate and act. 3. Funding autonomy, ring-fenced participatory funds that can be co-allocated through local assemblies rather than top-down officer discretion. 4. Transparent data access and open-source tools ensuring councillors and community partners can scrutinise contracts, budgets, and outcomes without bureaucratic barriers. 5. A culture of solidarity and mutual learning , cross-ward networks of councillors, activists, and community organisers sharing tactics for democratic engagement and resistance to centralisation.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
13	The ability to engage closely with residents which will become more difficult with more residents to look after and disengaged due to the increased ward sizes with new unitary structures	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Town and Parish Councillor engagement

Rushcliffe Borough Council hosts a biannual forum with the town and parish councils across the borough. An interactive LGR workshop was held at the forum on 3rd October to understand town and parish council views around LGR, its opportunities, the support they may need and any planning or discussions they have had so far about LGR. In addition to this a survey was sent out to all town and parish councils across Nottinghamshire.

Summary from the RBC Town and Parish Forum.

Planning and Preparation

- Concerned, reactive, low proactive planning
- Lack of preparation; limited discussion at parish council level
- Uncertainty about responsibilities, roles, and impact of LGR
- Concerns about capacity: part-time clerks, recruitment challenges, volunteer skills
- Training, CPD, and networking needed to manage new assets/services
- Engagement primarily digital, limiting input
- Questions about local grants, parish council status, and perception under LGR
- Planning and preparation are limited; support and guidance are sought
- Financial clarity and partnership strategies are key priorities moving forward

Opportunities and Risks
Risk-focused; cautious optimism about potential benefits

Opportunities

- Pooled resources could improve finances and service delivery.
- Devolved powers and better local accountability.
- Potential to reduce bureaucracy and support residents more effectively.
- Improved recycling and standardisation of services.
- Desire to work with NALC and other parishes for collective voice.
- Larger councils seen as faceless; small councils value local, efficient service.
- Emphasis on clear communication, collaboration, and support networks.

Risks

- Financial: cost, debt transfer, precept increases, and funding clarity.
- Governance: loss of local identity, decision-making power, MP/borough connection.
- Capacity: workload on parish councillors, reliance on volunteers, HR/training support.
- Planning and integration: IT, branding, elections, neighbourhood forums, and smaller councils being overlooked.
- Timeline perceived as rushed; uncertainty on roles of T&PCs.

Finances

- Cautious, seeking clarity
- Concern over association with city finances
- Lack of clarity on funding, grants, delegation schemes, and asset acquisition
- Precept management, potential increases, and local control are key issues
- Contingency planning, covenants, and rebranding costs are considerations

Partnership Working

- Opportunistic but cautious; need guidance
- Desire to work with NALC and other parishes for collective voice.
- Larger councils seen as faceless; small councils value local, efficient service.

Results from the town and parish council survey.

Q1 How do you envision the role of your Town or Parish Council evolving under Local Government Reorganisation?

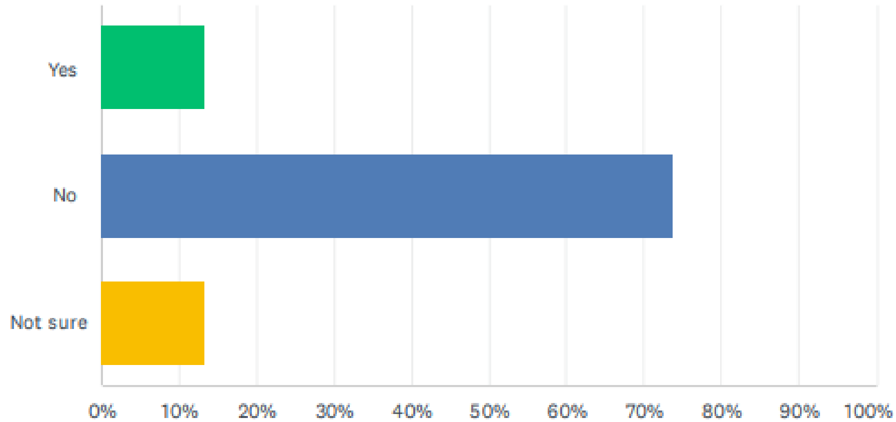
Answered: 38 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	a) To ensure the views of local residents are heard by the Government and by any Unitary Council created if LGR proceeds. b) Protecting services for residents and securing additional investment with any cost savings. c) Ensuring assets are managed locally d) Retaining a link with local democracy	11/6/2025 1:55 PM
2	Not been informed of changes	11/4/2025 9:32 PM
3	Dependant on proposals, no a lot no	11/3/2025 4:18 PM
4	We are full of trepidation at the loss of our local councils as it is proven time and time again that small is preferable to large unwieldy establishments.	11/2/2025 1:27 PM
5	It has an important role in providing a local link to any new LGR	11/1/2025 9:04 AM
6	We see an opportunity for parish councils to become stronger local delivery bodies and voices for neighbourhoods. Colwick Parish Council envisions a more empowered role: taking on greater responsibility for services that are best managed locally, and acting as a key democratic link between residents and higher tiers of government.	10/31/2025 6:23 PM
7	Our Parish Council support for topics currently delivered by the District Council will now be provided by a wider focused, more diluted resource covering a larger geographic area	10/31/2025 4:48 PM
8	There has not been much information at the moment regarding how roles will change. We have been told there shouldnt be much impact	10/31/2025 1:15 PM
9	Very little change due to our size	10/30/2025 8:59 AM
10	We sees its role evolving to become an even stronger voice for the local community. Under LGR, as larger authorities inevitably operate at a broader strategic level, parish councils like ours will be essential in ensuring that rural communities remain represented and their needs properly understood. We anticipate becoming more involved in shaping local priorities, managing small-scale community services, and maintaining the character and heritage of the parish.	10/30/2025 8:33 AM
11	I have absolutely no clue what-so-ever	10/29/2025 4:47 PM
12	Having more of a say in local matters	10/29/2025 11:40 AM
13	Local cllr	10/28/2025 12:50 PM
14	I have no idea.	10/27/2025 4:40 PM
15	Not sure - hoping not much gets devolved as we are a VERY small council!	10/27/2025 10:31 AM
16	As a small parish council, I don't anticipate any significant changes in our role.	10/27/2025 10:01 AM
17	It would be nice to think that more responsibilities and the associated budget would be handed to Parish Councils	10/25/2025 9:05 PM
18	N/K	10/24/2025 6:49 PM
19	Devolved services, provided funding is given.	10/23/2025 8:15 PM
20	No change	10/23/2025 6:41 PM
21	Not sure It may be easier to contact the correct people	10/23/2025 3:48 PM
22	Becoming a more local voice for championing the needs of residents in the Parish. Taking a greater role in management of local assets.	10/22/2025 3:35 PM

23	I feel that our voice will be lost , and we will be forgotten	10/22/2025 11:36 AM
24	I would hope that the role of the Parish Council wouldn't change that much, in that I believe they would still need to exist to be able to look after local communities.	10/22/2025 10:55 AM
25	Not a lot of change the main council already take little notice of parish concerns. It takes months and years of lobbying to get anything done. I don't expect any difference.	10/21/2025 4:52 PM
26	We would expect to carry out more services	10/21/2025 3:59 PM
27	Wondering if more of the smaller roles would be past down to Town & Parish and whether any additional funding would come with the work, things like grass cutting, litter bins etc. Wider range of responsibilities.	10/21/2025 3:40 PM
28	not very different, though depends on who we are with	10/21/2025 3:27 PM
29	No idea really, it's like parish councils are an after thought, all we have been told so far is that there's to be 2 unitary's for notts and its all about that level of it, the geographical area, nothing about the detail lower down, I suspect that things that some district councils provide, such as the automatic annual concurrent grants, street cleaning grants, cemetery grants etc for the parish councils will get stopped and so will the lengthsman grant from the county council so that the precepts all go up.	10/21/2025 3:19 PM
30	I am hoping nothing will change, but i expect some services may get passed down	10/21/2025 3:03 PM
31	We expect the Parish Council's role to become more proactive and hands-on, especially in representing the community's interests and possibly taking on some local service delivery. However, any expansion of duties would need to be carefully managed to ensure capacity and sustainability.	10/21/2025 2:50 PM
32	whilst I understand there may be more involvement at Parish Council level, I do not know what that will look like in reality.	10/21/2025 2:48 PM
33	Unchanged	10/21/2025 2:47 PM
34	We are prepared to take on more responsibility for local matters but only if this is fully funded over and above the current precept, and to the extent that it does not impose an inappropriate burden on our councillors, who give their time and expertise entirely without payment.	10/7/2025 5:09 PM
35	Potentially less focused on our area so it might be more difficulty to get information and support from the county council	10/7/2025 12:55 AM
36	It will become more complex to engage with a larger organisation on the day to day issues and getting focus from the Councillors too. PC's already have to work hard to get a voice on key issues like planning and this will become increasingly difficult, unless they are given more powers	10/6/2025 6:11 PM
37	No change because they are not listened to anyway	10/6/2025 8:13 AM
38	Easier to contact correct person	10/3/2025 2:25 PM

Q2 Has your Town or Parish Council started to plan and prepare for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	13.16%	5
No	73.68%	28
Not sure	13.16%	5
TOTAL		38

Q3 What support do you think your council will need, and from whom?

Answered: 37   Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	a) RBC to provide information as plans develop and timescales continually shared b) Sharing of key updates that can be communicated locally c) Conversations with County and Borough regarding local assets and the long-term protection. d) Material assistance with any implementation costs relating to any transfer of assets or change of responsibilities (for example, some legal costs are likely to be incurred in any asset transfer).	11/6/2025 1:55 PM
2	Not known	11/4/2025 9:32 PM
3	Information on impacts of all proposals at a local level	11/3/2025 4:18 PM
4	We will need reassurance that our service will not decline. We are thoroughly satisfied with Rushcliffe and Notts County Council who are dependable, within easy reach and have our locality at heart.	11/2/2025 1:27 PM
5	Clear guidlines on how we can link local needs to the larger LGR	11/1/2025 9:04 AM
6	Clear guidance from the County and Borough Councils on governance models, funding mechanisms, and the scope of devolved powers. Support in financial planning, capacity building, and legal frameworks for transferring assets and responsibilities would also be valuable.	10/31/2025 6:23 PM
7	Rapid confirmation of who to contact for each specific area of service. Comms collateral to reflect this, which can be included in local magazines and Parish websites.	10/31/2025 4:48 PM
8	A lot from both RBC and NCC	10/31/2025 1:15 PM
9	Need a clear line for services to the community such as waste collection, planning, road services to name just a few.	10/30/2025 8:59 AM
10	We would welcome structured guidance, communication, and training from both Nottinghamshire County Council and the District Councils, alongside support from the Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils (NALC). Help understanding governance changes, funding streams, and potential devolved responsibilities would be vital, particularly for smaller parishes with limited administrative capacity.	10/30/2025 8:33 AM
11	We need support. What and from whom I cannot say.	10/29/2025 4:47 PM
12	Legal	10/29/2025 11:40 AM
13	Depends on what the new council will devolve- if any responsibilities	10/28/2025 12:50 PM
14	All dependent upon what changes are required.	10/27/2025 4:40 PM
15	It depends what changes there will be - having no idea what is coming it is hard to plan or to request support... I think the thing I will need most regardless of what changes occur is a 'who's who' for when it comes to contacting people eg planning, waste, nuisance, etc. At least with that I can request support when I know what else I need.	10/27/2025 10:31 AM
16	Clear information from the new Unitary Authority as to which department covers which public service	10/27/2025 10:01 AM
17	ALC to coordinate impact of new responsibilities. Principle Councils as to the effects of the changes and how it will impact the delivered services.	10/25/2025 9:05 PM
18	It depends on the change, if it is to become professional a lot of assistance will be required.	10/24/2025 6:49 PM
19	We don't actually know as we don't understand what our role will be.	10/23/2025 8:15 PM
20	Information on how changes will impact parish council from the borough council.	10/23/2025 6:41 PM
21	Not sure	10/23/2025 3:48 PM

22	We are a large Town Council and have sufficient expertise.	10/22/2025 3:35 PM
23	No idea at this stage	10/22/2025 11:36 AM
24	This will depend on if we will be gaining any extra responsibilities, if we do then we may need training to be made available for the extra responsibilities.	10/22/2025 10:55 AM
25	Good communication as to who does what and main contacts provided that we can go directly to as the normal process to go to customer services gets nothing done. Going direct to a department or main lead gets things done. By passing bureaucracy and red tape	10/21/2025 4:52 PM
26	Financial support will be required for any extra services that the Parish Council provides	10/21/2025 3:59 PM
27	currently, not sure, but when this gets clearer, maybe the new Unitary councils, government paperwork, NALC and not sure who else	10/21/2025 3:40 PM
28	when things are reorganised we may need help from the new Council	10/21/2025 3:27 PM
29	Parish Councils need - at least 1 full financial year before the unitary starts to be told if concurrent, cemetery, toilet, st cleaning and lengthsman grants will cease or not as all that would have to go onto the parish council precept. ASAP once known they need to be told all the new generic email addresses for the new planning, environment services, parks/cemeteries depts etc and who is in charge of these, good communication/contact lists for each parish council	10/21/2025 3:19 PM
30	Guidance and Communication Financial Support and Clarity Legal and Administrative Support	10/21/2025 3:03 PM
31	We will need significant support from the new authority and organisations such as NALC and SLCC to understand new responsibilities and ensure compliance. Guidance on HR, finance, and governance will be essential. As a small council with one Clerk/RFO and two part-time caretakers for the Parish Hall, we would also need assistance in assessing workload implications and potentially funding to employ additional administrative or operational staff if new duties are devolved.	10/21/2025 2:50 PM
32	It will depend very much on what extra services we are required to take on board.	10/21/2025 2:48 PM
33	None	10/21/2025 2:47 PM
34	If our responsibility increases we will need funding and expert advice (see 1 above).	10/7/2025 5:09 PM
35	Not sure	10/7/2025 12:55 AM
36	Better access to key services potentially with a dedicated support network from the larger new Org. Clear points of contact and family trees of the org structure. More input to key decisions.	10/6/2025 6:11 PM
37	None because nothing will change	10/6/2025 8:13 AM

Q4 What do you see as the key opportunities for Town and Parish Councils arising from LGR?

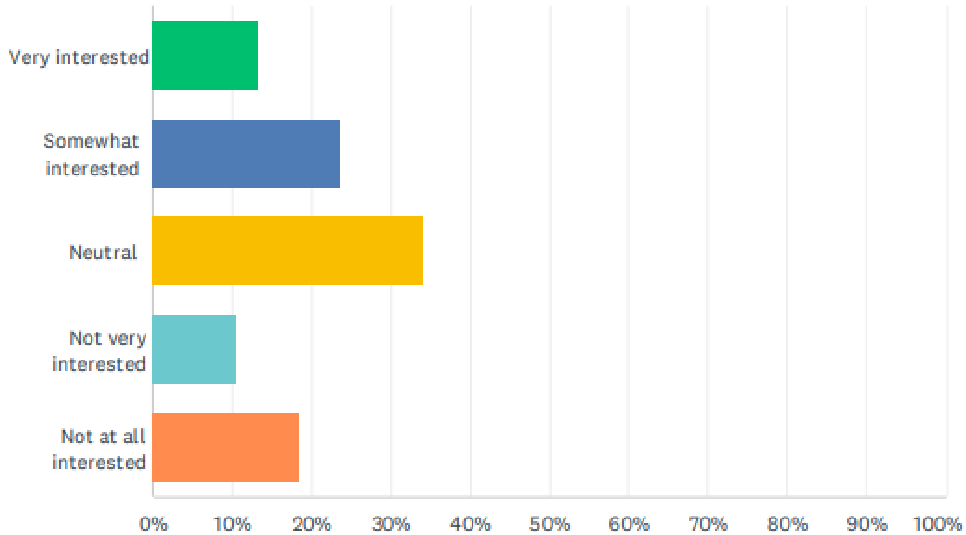
Answered: 38 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	a) To consider taking on local assets to ensure they are managed locally by the Town Council b) To consider offering additional services currently managed by Borough and County so locally elected members can ensure local services are delivered to the residents	11/6/2025 1:55 PM
2	Not Known	11/4/2025 9:32 PM
3	Potential high, dependant on overcoming outdated legislation and ways of working	11/3/2025 4:18 PM
4	None.	11/2/2025 1:27 PM
5	Their role will be vitial to highlight need and concerns regarding their local area.	11/1/2025 9:04 AM
6	LGR offers the chance to strengthen local democracy and deliver services closer to communities. It could enable parish councils to lead on environmental management, local resilience, wellbeing initiatives, and place-based priorities that directly reflect residents' needs. It's also an opportunity to integrate local voices more deeply into strategic decision-making and planning.	10/31/2025 6:23 PM
7	A fresh start in terms of Council contact for getting things done, where previously the County Council has been either ineffective or over-stretched	10/31/2025 4:48 PM
8	None dependant upon who we become amalgamated with in the LGR this could have a very negative impact with no opportunities	10/31/2025 1:15 PM
9	A clear path for assistance and rapid response to a problem - a factor often absent now	10/30/2025 8:59 AM
10	A stronger local democratic voice for small communities. Potential for more responsive, locally focused service delivery. Opportunity to shape how local facilities, green spaces, and community assets are managed. Improved collaboration between parishes on shared priorities such as transport, planning, and environmental protection. Better alignment between parish priorities and broader unitary authority strategies.	10/30/2025 8:33 AM
11	That is interesting, but again, does anyone know?	10/29/2025 4:47 PM
12	More power to model local service	10/29/2025 11:40 AM
13	Local delivery of services if funding devolvef	10/28/2025 12:50 PM
14	I have no idea.	10/27/2025 4:40 PM
15	I am not sure.	10/27/2025 10:31 AM
16	We may have more control over local amenities/services. However, funding may need to increase to support them	10/27/2025 10:01 AM
17	For some elements of the services to be handed to the Parish Councils. For stronger relationships between the principle Council and Parish Councils.	10/25/2025 9:05 PM
18	Town Coucils more say, parishes limited.	10/24/2025 6:49 PM
19	None at the moment, apart from the opportunity for devolved services	10/23/2025 8:15 PM
20	None	10/23/2025 6:41 PM
21	Easier to access the right person	10/23/2025 3:48 PM
22	Acquisition of assets and services that a unitary may not be interested in.	10/22/2025 3:35 PM
23	None	10/22/2025 11:36 AM

24	To be able to keep that link as the first tire of the demographic ladder that the local community can turn to.	10/22/2025 10:55 AM
25	None	10/21/2025 4:52 PM
26	Potentially services could be delivered proactively based on local knowledge.	10/21/2025 3:59 PM
27	More responsibility for our own area, choices in when job are completed, more respect from residents because we will be doing the work	10/21/2025 3:40 PM
28	small PCs being pushed to the bottom of the pile possibly things being given to us to do ie street lights	10/21/2025 3:27 PM
29	The only things that should transfer are things like any District/County/Borough owned benches, flower tubs/planters, maybe allotments, open burial grounds, play parks etc to the parish councils nothing at a higher level	10/21/2025 3:19 PM
30	Local Government Reorganisation presents a valuable opportunity for Town and Parish Councils to strengthen their role as the most local tier of government and to enhance community engagement and service delivery. The key opportunities we identify include:	10/21/2025 3:03 PM
31	Greater influence over local decision-making and service delivery. Potential to improve efficiency and responsiveness by delivering services locally. Strengthened community engagement and local pride. Opportunities to collaborate with neighbouring councils to share resources. Ability to tailor services more closely to the needs of residents.	10/21/2025 2:50 PM
32	If done right there could be better local action under LGR but I don't see that Parish Councils will get to shape how that looks, we will not be given a choice	10/21/2025 2:48 PM
33	We'll be an even smaller fish in a bigger pond	10/21/2025 2:47 PM
34	More control/stewardship in respect of local matters.	10/7/2025 5:09 PM
35	Not sure there will get many positive opportunities, we are likely to receive less support and funding opportunities.	10/7/2025 12:55 AM
36	Opportunity for more working together at Parish level and possible larger local communities. More local say and influence by those closest to the issues in the specific community	10/6/2025 6:11 PM
37	More communication	10/6/2025 8:13 AM
38	Cost effective	10/3/2025 2:25 PM

Q5 What appetite does your council have for taking on additional responsibilities as part of LGR?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very interested	13.16%	5
Somewhat interested	23.68%	9
Neutral	34.21%	13
Not very interested	10.53%	4
Not at all interested	18.42%	7
TOTAL		38

Q6 What areas of additional responsibility would you like to see your council take on?

Answered: 35   Skipped: 3

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	No full consideration of potential services at this time, but local assets should be managed or owned by the Town Council on behalf of the community to protect the assets.	11/6/2025 1:55 PM
2	None	11/4/2025 9:32 PM
3	None	11/3/2025 4:18 PM
4	Our current Councils are excellent. We have already taken on the Lengthsman scheme which works well. Volunteers are few and far between. It is unfair to ask for more jobs to be undertaken by them.	11/2/2025 1:27 PM
5	Street cleaning, flood and climate resilience, biodiversity enhancement, community engagement, and a stronger advisory role in local planning and transport decisions.	10/31/2025 6:23 PM
6	More of a voice in prioritising local issues within the Parish. Ability to escalate effectively for non-performance of Council responsibilities	10/31/2025 4:48 PM
7	None	10/31/2025 1:15 PM
8	Management of road side vegetation.	10/30/2025 8:59 AM
9	Management of local green spaces, verges, and footpaths. Maintenance and improvement of local amenities (benches, noticeboards, signage, play areas). Support for local events and community engagement initiatives. Greater consultation rights and involvement in planning and development decisions affecting the parish.	10/30/2025 8:33 AM
10	Defence, especially the Navy.	10/29/2025 4:47 PM
11	Maintaince of the village, able to prioritize problem areas	10/29/2025 11:40 AM
12	Highways, economic development , heritage assets, leisure and sports, transport strategy and others	10/28/2025 12:50 PM
13	With current resources we are unable to take on any additional responsibilities.	10/27/2025 4:40 PM
14	Being very small we don't have the staffing or budget to take on any responsibilities and if extra funds were passed on for this then our share would be so small it wouldn't cover anything. There would have to be a huge increase in precept for us to manage any work undertaken even if the work itself were funded. There would need to be clerk's training to understand what was involved eg in terms of regulations and safety, then time actually organising contracts and checking up on the work so the clerk's hours would have to increase pushing us into employer's NIC territory. Residents would definitely see an impact in council tax bills.	10/27/2025 10:31 AM
15	Not sure. Possibly planning??	10/27/2025 10:01 AM
16	some highway repairs	10/25/2025 9:05 PM
17	Naming roads and temporary road closures. A mandatory voice on all consultations in the parish.	10/24/2025 6:49 PM
18	We cannot respond to thus as we don't know what may be offered to us.	10/23/2025 8:15 PM
19	Not sure	10/23/2025 6:41 PM
20	Anything provided there is a workable package of support and funding behind it.	10/22/2025 3:35 PM
21	We are a very poor parish precept only £8000 and no staff apart from the clerk, so cannot afford to take on any additional responsibility	10/22/2025 11:36 AM

22	It would depend on how things would be split up and what extra responsibilities were being offered out.	10/22/2025 10:55 AM
23	Unsure	10/21/2025 4:52 PM
24	Not sure as our Parish Warden already carries out outdoor maintenance that would usually be done by the district or county council.	10/21/2025 3:59 PM
25	Grass cutting in the 30mph areas and if funding was given maybe the street bin emptying even though that will be bring big challenges when all waste should be separated.	10/21/2025 3:40 PM
26	none	10/21/2025 3:27 PM
27	As per 4	10/21/2025 3:19 PM
28	Grass cutting	10/21/2025 3:03 PM
29	We would consider limited additional responsibilities that can be realistically managed within our staffing capacity — for example, environmental projects, local amenities, or supporting community wellbeing initiatives.	10/21/2025 2:50 PM
30	With the resources we have and all volunteers I do not see the parish Council wanting to take on greater responsibility without proper support, however I can't answer that without some understanding of how it will all work in reality.	10/21/2025 2:48 PM
31	Under the current set up, there appears to be no appetite to fill potholes in our local roads. We'd like to take that on.	10/21/2025 2:47 PM
32	Local matters such as street bins etc - but this would have to be fully funded over and above the current precept.	10/7/2025 5:09 PM
33	Be more included and actually have a say in the discussions around constructible land and gray land, so we can protect our village from getting more new houses while the village already deals with 4 ongoing housing development projects and hasn't even had a chance to expand its service to match it's upcoming population	10/7/2025 12:55 AM
34	Planning input, planning of transport links and roadworks. More influence on developers.	10/6/2025 6:11 PM
35	None	10/6/2025 8:13 AM

Q7 How would your council prepare for taking on additional responsibilities?

Answered: 35 Skipped: 3

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Financial impact and staff levels would require a review.	11/6/2025 1:55 PM
2	We won't	11/4/2025 9:32 PM
3	We wouldn't	11/3/2025 4:18 PM
4	I think it extremely unlikely that our small Council will wish to undertake any more than they already do.	11/2/2025 1:27 PM
5	Through training, partnerships with neighbouring councils and community organisations, and close collaboration with the Borough and County Councils, and EMCCA. We would review our financial and staffing capacity and develop clear plans for phased responsibility transfer where appropriate.	10/31/2025 6:23 PM
6	Unknown until we have new contacts in place and some idea of Parish Council remit	10/31/2025 4:48 PM
7	None	10/31/2025 1:15 PM
8	Set aside a member to manage change	10/30/2025 8:59 AM
9	We would review our operational capacity, explore partnership models with neighbouring parishes, and seek advice and training from NALC. Any assumption of new responsibilities would be approached gradually and supported by clear service-level agreements and financial planning.	10/30/2025 8:33 AM
10	Dam Rainworth Water	10/29/2025 4:47 PM
11	Need someone with background in maintaining assets	10/29/2025 11:40 AM
12	Depends on fundong streams	10/28/2025 12:50 PM
13	Impossible to say without knowing what they are.	10/27/2025 4:40 PM
14	If we had to do it, then re-evaluate the clerk's roll and implement an new contract - which would probably mean recruiting a new clerk because the present clerk doesn't want extra hours. Arrange training. Not sure what else we'd do.	10/27/2025 10:31 AM
15	As above, increase in funding to support. However, this may also lead to an increase in workload for me as clerk	10/27/2025 10:01 AM
16	formalisation and strengthening of Lengthsman Scheme	10/25/2025 9:05 PM
17	Ser up processes.	10/24/2025 6:49 PM
18	As above.	10/23/2025 8:15 PM
19	not sure	10/23/2025 6:41 PM
20	Financial planning, resource planning, business case, options appraisal.	10/22/2025 3:35 PM
21	See above we cannot do this with out funding	10/22/2025 11:36 AM
22	Again this would depend on the extra responsibilities that have been allocated, but in principle the council would put an action plan in place and then follow the action plan.	10/22/2025 10:55 AM
23	We are to small and do not have the infrastructure in place as we would need staff and contracts.	10/21/2025 4:52 PM
24	Would need to extra staff time required	10/21/2025 3:59 PM

25	Hopefully extend the current hours of the grounds team, but money is the key to all of this, but until it is clearer it is hard to decide what might be required	10/21/2025 3:40 PM
26	we would just have to get on with it	10/21/2025 3:27 PM
27	Plenty of notice and precept rise for the extra work	10/21/2025 3:19 PM
28	More staff	10/21/2025 3:03 PM
29	We would need to review staff capacity and potentially expand our workforce, which currently consists of one Clerk/RFO and two part-time caretakers. Any preparation would require clear funding commitments and transitional support to ensure workloads remain manageable. Training and shared services with neighbouring councils would also be explored.	10/21/2025 2:50 PM
30	as above, Parish Councillors are unpaid volunteers who already have responsibilities, I am not sure how much more responsibility can be given to Parish Councils without some form of support both financial and expertise.	10/21/2025 2:48 PM
31	It'd be easy.	10/21/2025 2:47 PM
32	Too early to say!	10/7/2025 5:09 PM
33	Not sure	10/7/2025 12:55 AM
34	Initially we would need to gain support within the council and do that in conjunction with any new Org.	10/6/2025 6:11 PM
35	Depends on what is on offer	10/6/2025 8:13 AM

Q8 What do you see as the key risks for Town and Parish Councils in relation to LGR?

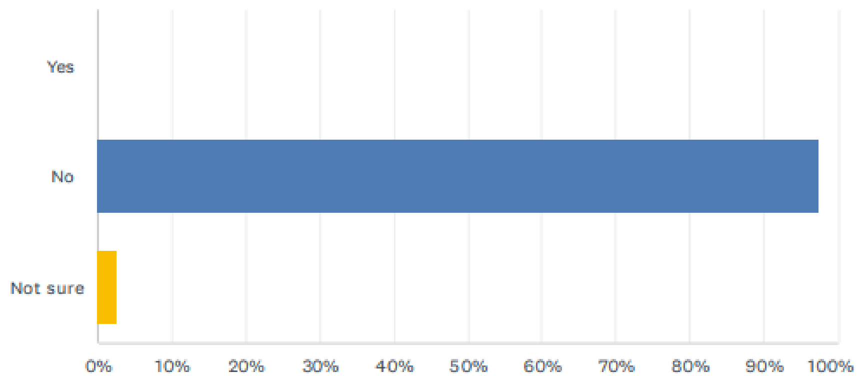
Answered: 37 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Local services managed by a Unitary Council with no local knowledge, disposal of local assets and loss of services.	11/6/2025 1:55 PM
2	Lack of information,being pushed more responsibilities	11/4/2025 9:32 PM
3	Dependant upon which proposal is carried forward there may be cultural community based issues which nobody seems willing to address Costs. Ths is an unnecessary exercise the cost of which will be phased on to local citizens, many of whom are at financial breaking point. The lack of a community focussed approach in the options identified in my area will lead to a disengagement at a local level.	11/3/2025 4:18 PM
4	Wastage of good money, as the City Council have dramatically demonstrated. Loss of our steady financial stability in Rushcliffe and a decline in our services overall, especially libraries and leisure facilities.	11/2/2025 1:27 PM
5	The main risks are insufficient transfer of funding or resources, inconsistent support across tiers, and overburdening smaller parishes. Without equitable financial arrangements, capacity building, and clear communication, local delivery could be undermined.	10/31/2025 6:23 PM
6	Two thirds of those who expressed a view were AGAINST the most favoured option - strong chance of the whole process stalling through lack of local engagement	10/31/2025 4:48 PM
7	It could have a very negative imact on Rushcliffe councils if we are merged with the City Councils. Very different needs and wants.	10/31/2025 1:15 PM
8	Being swallowed up by a urban council who has no interest in rural communities	10/30/2025 8:59 AM
9	Devolution of responsibilities without corresponding funding or administrative support. Increased workload on small councils with limited officer time. Loss of local distinctiveness or influence within a larger. authority structure. Lack of clarity or communication during the transition period Loss of a voice if local tier of government is removed	10/30/2025 8:33 AM
10	I shall stop being silly. I have no idea.	10/29/2025 4:47 PM
11	Being more accountable locally	10/29/2025 11:40 AM
12	No devolution of any services and no local engagement as new Council remote	10/28/2025 12:50 PM
13	Unknown.	10/27/2025 4:40 PM
14	Lack of knowledge/expertise in the responsibilities that passed on. Lack of funding to implement what is required. Loss of clerk's due to the stress of change and/or additional work.	10/27/2025 10:31 AM
15	As one of the most northerly parish councils, we may not receive the required attention of a new Unitary Authority based in the south of Nottinghamshire, and therefore public services may not reach the desired level	10/27/2025 10:01 AM
16	marginalisation of Parish Council position, lack of communication from principle Council, lack of coordinated approach to the changes, a worsening of linkage between principle Councils and Parish Councils	10/25/2025 9:05 PM
17	Lack of staff time, in experience of systems	10/24/2025 6:49 PM
18	More public dissatisfaction with the loss of local connections, lack of knowledge from the new authority, and diversion if funds to more urban areas.	10/23/2025 8:15 PM
19	loss of local connections, being ignored by a larger organization.	10/23/2025 6:41 PM
20	getting things done	10/23/2025 3:48 PM

21	Loss of local partnerships with the District Council. Becoming a focus for local people to air their concerns due to a perceived lack of connect with a unitary.	10/22/2025 3:35 PM
22	Local knowledge and working relationships with NSDC will be lost, to the detriment of the residents of Wellow	10/22/2025 11:36 AM
23	That they get swallowed up into the newly formed larger councils and we loose that link into the local communities.	10/22/2025 10:55 AM
24	More red tape and local raised taxes being used by areas that cannot spend in line with their income	10/21/2025 4:52 PM
25	Decisions being made by people who are not aware of the local demographics.	10/21/2025 3:59 PM
26	Not have good links to the new unitary council and becoming remote, not enough funding given, could be too much work for the current structure and not having the information to shape a new one.	10/21/2025 3:40 PM
27	as before, being forgotten about	10/21/2025 3:27 PM
28	Cant think of any	10/21/2025 3:19 PM
29	Loss of local voice and representation Financial pressures	10/21/2025 3:03 PM
30	Increased workload without additional staffing or funding. Risk of burnout for existing staff and volunteers. Unclear lines of responsibility between tiers of government. Financial strain if new services are devolved without appropriate budgets. Reduced community confidence if service standards cannot be maintained.	10/21/2025 2:50 PM
31	losing the local voice and support that District Councillors provide. and the responsiveness from the current District Council	10/21/2025 2:48 PM
32	We get ignored even more	10/21/2025 2:47 PM
33	The key risk is that responsibilities are given to PCs that they cannot discharge, because of lack of funding, lack of expertise or both.	10/7/2025 5:09 PM
34	Funding and opportunities swallowed up by other areas and the village not getting enough support to grow as it should	10/7/2025 12:55 AM
35	Bigger gap between the front line and the support network. Less consideration of local issues and subtleties.	10/6/2025 6:11 PM
36	They disappear	10/6/2025 8:13 AM
37	Being lost in a mass organisation	10/3/2025 2:25 PM

Q9 Has your council set aside any funds to help prepare for LGR?

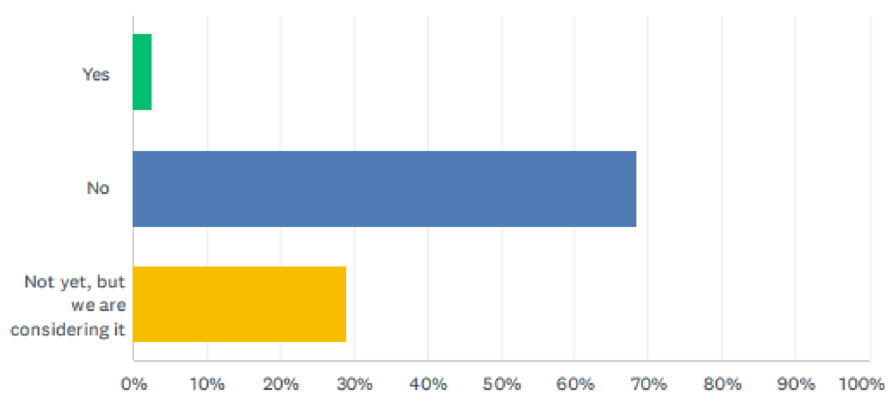
Answered: 38   Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	0.00%	0
No	97.37%	37
Not sure	2.63%	1
TOTAL		38

Q10 Is your council considering using your precept to support LGR (now or in the future)?

Answered: 38   Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	2.63%	1
No	68.42%	26
Not yet, but we are considering it	28.95%	11
TOTAL		38

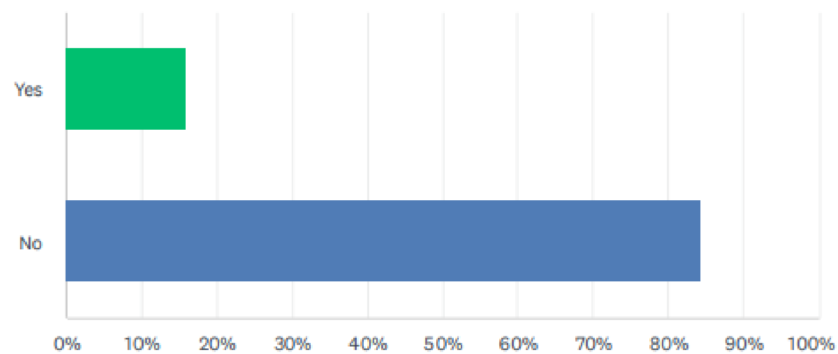
Q11 If yes, in what ways is your precept being used or considered for LGR?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 31

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	We may consider allocating funds for councillor and clerk training, consultation with residents, and community engagement once the structure and responsibilities under LGR are clearer.	10/30/2025 8:33 AM
2	Strategy for devolution in prep	10/28/2025 12:50 PM
3	Not yet as currently we can't see that this is going to impact Parish Council but this may change if it looks like there is going to be a significant impact on the Parish Council.	10/22/2025 10:55 AM
4	Waiting to see what costs will come our way	10/21/2025 4:52 PM
5	Its far too soon to ask this question, the parishes need to know if the grants are stopping mentioned earlier and need to know what or if any assets/land in a particular parish is to transfer to the parish council, it almost seems a joke you're asking this quesiton as it insinuates you have no clue about things from the parish council perspective as you're asking a 'cart before the horse' question.	10/21/2025 3:19 PM
6	e may need to consider future precept increases to support staff expansion, training, or the transition to new responsibilities under LGR, depending on the scope of devolved services.	10/21/2025 2:50 PM
7	N/a	10/6/2025 6:11 PM

Q12 Has your council considered working in partnership with other Town or Parish Councils?

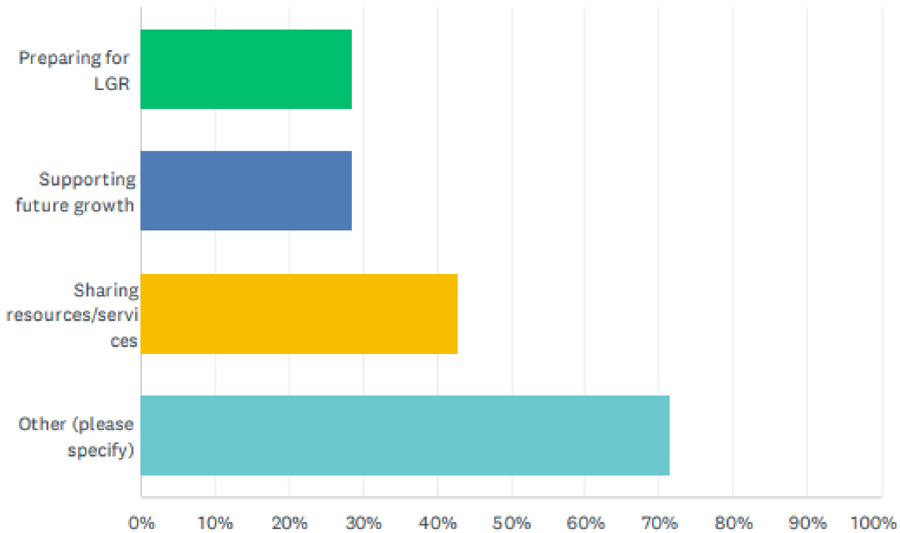
Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	15.79%	6
No	84.21%	32
TOTAL		38

Q13 If yes, what is the focus of this partnership? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 7 Skipped: 31



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Preparing for LGR	28.57%	2
Supporting future growth	28.57%	2
Sharing resources/services	42.86%	3
Other (please specify)	71.43%	5
Total Respondents: 7		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Managing a large number of developments/planning application in a small area f	10/30/2025 8:59 AM
2	So far, just making contact	10/27/2025 10:01 AM
3	Parishes are all very different, apart from parish forums etc the day to day running isnt something to share as all different assets/land/building/needs/population per parish	10/21/2025 3:19 PM
4	We work together with a other parish meeting	10/21/2025 2:47 PM
5	Sharing methods of working and sharing experience and advices	10/7/2025 12:55 AM

Q14 What aspects of community identity and democratic voice do you feel need protecting?

Answered: 33 Skipped: 5

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Residents will want a strong link to locally delivered services and a local face. It is likely that a remote Unitary covering half of the County will be too remote to deliver that	11/6/2025 1:55 PM
2	Planning	11/4/2025 9:32 PM
3	Protection of smaller rural (farming) communities isessential	11/3/2025 4:18 PM
4	We are upset to see urban sprawl and the swamping of villages of character by ugly new building with no architectural features of any sort. Fairham Pastures is an example of ugliness. Warehouses painted grey stand our like sore thumbs. Why weren't they painted green to merge in with the countryside. I feel we will totally lose our voice in a huge organisation most likely run by faceless Councillors who do not appreciate our local area. We will be unable to speak to a Person and be fobbed off with a computerised answerphone. It will be difficult to demonstrate any democratic voice.	11/2/2025 1:27 PM
5	Colwick's identity is rooted in its riverside setting, proximity to railways, heritage, and strong community networks. Residents have a deep connection to the place - nearby Colwick Country Park and Colwick Woods, as well as our local rectory fields. We believe local voices must be protected through genuine consultation, fair representation, and devolved decision-making powers that respect each community's distinct character.	10/31/2025 6:23 PM
6	Local (Parish) priorities to be heard and responded to	10/31/2025 4:48 PM
7	We are a rural community and need to stay as such. Very different needs to city.	10/31/2025 1:15 PM
8	Need for small communities to be able to have their say	10/30/2025 8:59 AM
9	Preserving the rural identity and historic character of the village. Ensuring that residents' voices are heard in decisions affecting housing, planning, and infrastructure. Protecting valued community assets, green spaces, and the village environment. Maintaining strong two-way communication between residents and elected representatives.	10/30/2025 8:33 AM
10	All groups in the village should help mould the future	10/29/2025 11:40 AM
11	Local engagement and ac accountability for a small rural town	10/28/2025 12:50 PM
12	As changes are unknown impossible to answer.	10/27/2025 4:40 PM
13	The fact that the council held a public consultation on LGR with two options and then voted to prepare to submit a third model to Government before the consultation had even closed, shows there is no democratic voice. We feel very disconnected from this whole process. We do worry that planning may be considered by people who have never been near the area let alone know the local feelings and identity and this is something we would like protected by ensuring that there planning officer on local applications is someone local.	10/27/2025 10:31 AM
14	A resident of Blyth, north Nottinghamshire may not have their concerns heard by a Unitary Authority councillor in Nottingham city/south Nottinghamshire	10/27/2025 10:01 AM
15	The current status quo should be a minimum position but should be enhanced by the principle Council through the LGR	10/25/2025 9:05 PM
16	A mandatory voice on all consultations in the parish.	10/24/2025 6:49 PM
17	All of it, as none has been considered. Present District and County Councillors understand the communities and their agricultural heritage. This will be lost.	10/23/2025 8:15 PM
18	Preservation of local accountability	10/23/2025 6:41 PM

19	To keep our parish recognised	10/23/2025 3:48 PM
20	Local knowledge, historical issues and problems	10/22/2025 11:36 AM
21	The local voice needs protecting on views like planning applications but also on the hire and use of village amenities like the Village Hall and the burial ground.	10/22/2025 10:55 AM
22	Just start actually listening to local knowledge it's not now done.	10/21/2025 4:52 PM
23	Local opinions	10/21/2025 3:59 PM
24	we are a small town and need to protect our community feeling, but be part of the larger organisation. We would need representatives in the larger organisations to speak out for what we need for the community, one size does not fit all.	10/21/2025 3:40 PM
25	Parish Councils still need to be heard	10/21/2025 3:27 PM
26	Our Council believes that Local Government Reorganisation must not dilute the strong sense of local identity and representation that Town and Parish Councils provide	10/21/2025 3:03 PM
27	The strong sense of local identity, volunteer spirit, and community involvement in Trowell are vital. Protecting the local democratic voice — ensuring residents can easily engage with their Parish Council — is crucial, especially if larger governance structures risk diluting local input.	10/21/2025 2:50 PM
28	We are rural not city	10/21/2025 2:47 PM
29	We have only recently become a parish council. We are a distinct community, geographically separate from our neighbours, with our own identity and history. Previously we had been part of a parish council with another community, much larger than ourselves, in which our interests were largely overlooked. If we are again forced to combine with other communities, we believe that our identity and our sense of community would be threatened, and on a practical level our needs would not be met.	10/7/2025 5:09 PM
30	The identity of the village and the pace at which it should grow and the accommodations it needs. Government needs to listen instead of just slapping an extra 500 houses on a village and hope it just manages the same as beforw	10/7/2025 12:55 AM
31	Recognition of the different communities that make up the wider structure and protect the rural nature of the region. The benefit of most PC's is that they are non political which is an advantage when looking at the LGR progress!	10/6/2025 6:11 PM
32	Someone to actually listen to parish councils	10/6/2025 8:13 AM
33	Village identity	10/3/2025 2:25 PM

Q15 How do you see communities having a local 'voice' in local decision-making in the future?

Answered: 34   Skipped: 4

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	We are unaware of any proposal to reform the current Town/Parish structure, assuming that is the case there should be no change in the focus of the local 'voice'	11/6/2025 1:55 PM
2	Unitary cllrs will be too busy to care about smaller communities, so unitaries will need community lead focus strategies	11/3/2025 4:18 PM
3	There will be no local voice, just a computer. Our questions will go unanswered. Big organisations never work for the people. e.g. Large hospitals versus Cottage hospitals.	11/2/2025 1:27 PM
4	We envision parish councils acting as the first tier of participatory democracy. Communities should have structured opportunities to feed into decisions at every stage, not just during formal consultations. This could include regular community forums, participatory budgeting, neighbourhood assemblies, and digital engagement tools that make it easier for people to contribute ideas and hold decision-makers accountable. For Colwick, a strong local voice means residents helping to set priorities for investment, shaping environmental and infrastructure projects, and working alongside public bodies to co-design solutions. To achieve this, parish councils need recognition as equal partners within reformed local government - with the capacity, funding, and legal standing to represent residents effectively and inclusively.	10/31/2025 6:23 PM
5	Through the Parish Council - the new Council structure is covering too large an area to be aware of local issues and opportunities. If Govt are stating that any change to Parish Council is "out of scope" then we have lost before we start.	10/31/2025 4:48 PM
6	We dont we think this will have a negative impact	10/31/2025 1:15 PM
7	Parish Meetings to have the same status as rural councils	10/30/2025 8:59 AM
8	By empowering parish councils to act as the first and most local tier of government — ensuring representation at unitary level, having clear consultation routes, and access to decision-makers. We believe effective digital engagement, local forums, and direct representation in unitary consultations will be key to maintaining that local voice.	10/30/2025 8:33 AM
9	I'm thinking that we need to show that we're listening and take action where necessary. Also highlight the achievement and progress made	10/29/2025 11:40 AM
10	Little as the centre of gravity will be urban areas to the east However this will.be fought hard	10/28/2025 12:50 PM
11	As changes are unknown impossible to answer.	10/27/2025 4:40 PM
12	We don't... They have had very little voice so far and will have even less under the new structure!	10/27/2025 10:31 AM
13	No idea!	10/27/2025 10:01 AM
14	a coordinated approach to communications and relationships - for the principle Council not to 'forget' that Parish Councils exist	10/25/2025 9:05 PM
15	senior layers of gov must comply to local requirements	10/24/2025 6:49 PM
16	At this point, we don't.	10/23/2025 8:15 PM
17	LGA will most likely reduce this.	10/23/2025 6:41 PM
18	Town and Parishes should become a conduit to Unitaries. Unitaries must recognise town and parishes as important partners.	10/22/2025 3:35 PM
19	Not at all	10/22/2025 11:36 AM
20	I think it is important for local communities to have a local voice in decision making. As you	10/22/2025 10:55 AM

	don't want someone who lives the other side of the county and doesn't know the local issues making decisions that could impact the local community.	
21	It's the only way if this is to succeed.	10/21/2025 4:52 PM
22	Consultation	10/21/2025 3:59 PM
23	By having several representatives in the larger council to hear the needs of our community.	10/21/2025 3:40 PM
24	by keeping in contact with the new Cllr responsible for our area	10/21/2025 3:27 PM
25	Like they do now, it will be better because instead of thee farce that can be District Planning blaming County Highways and vice versa they will be both the same authority so cant blame each other any more, also the farce where the District or Borough cllr is Labour and the County Cllr is Conservative and they dont work together, get rid of both and one unitary cllr will work much better, the locals can approach their new combined unitary cllr for anything that was formally county or district related. Hopefully, the shake up will get rid of all the old 'past it' dead wood cllrs out there that as it has been said to us in the past "are literally wheeled out to vote from their wheelchairs and zimmer frames" and having less cllrs covering a larger remit of responsibilities, with further to travel to meetings will mean those old guard sort to slow and who do nothing wont stand anymore and people of the next generation who are more able to cope with the needs of local people and their voice step forward. Hopefully a decent sized allowance for each unitary cllr will be set meaning they can spend more time on this as their job.	10/21/2025 3:19 PM
26	Our Council believes that even in a reorganised local government structure, communities must retain meaningful opportunities to influence decisions that affect their daily lives.	10/21/2025 3:03 PM
27	hrough empowered, well-supported parish councils that remain close to their communities and continue to provide an accessible route for residents to influence decisions. Regular engagement, transparent communication, and representation at higher levels of government will be key.	10/21/2025 2:50 PM
28	Until we see what the full proposal looks like it is hard to tell what decision making will still be at local level, this survey assumes we all know everything about LGR and how it will work whereas many Parish Councillors don't.	10/21/2025 2:48 PM
29	Not sure	10/21/2025 2:47 PM
30	That's the key question! What's the best system of governance that provides local empowerment but also provides efficiency, eliminating duplication and maximising economies of scale? I do think that if under a unitary authority, parish/town councils have to group together, it effectively creates anther tier and so defeats the object of the the unitary approach.	10/7/2025 5:09 PM
31	Parish councils actually having a vote power in some decision directly impacting their infrastructure and services	10/7/2025 12:55 AM
32	Clearer visibility of a defined and agreed set of topics that would require a Local voice or proper consultation before being processed, as we lose the local linkage this will become increasingly important.	10/6/2025 6:11 PM
33	There wont be one	10/6/2025 8:13 AM
34	Not sure	10/3/2025 2:25 PM

NCC Overview Committee Recommendations

Overview Committee 5 November 2025

Neighbourhood Governance arrangements

- That proposals around the development of neighbourhood governance models should clearly show how they will effectively deliver public services and meet local need at a very local level. Neighbourhood governance arrangements should also enable residents to be able influence how services are delivered in their local communities.

- The structure of neighbourhood governance arrangements should be as streamlined as possible, with the aim of avoiding excessive bureaucracy and duplication to fully realise the potential benefits of local government reorganisation.

- Consideration should be given to show how models of neighbourhood governance could work in partnership with existing Town and Parish Councils.

- Consideration should be given to how neighbourhood governance in non-parished areas could operate effectively and how arrangements in these areas may need to vary from how neighbourhood governance is delivered in areas with Town or Parish Councils.

Engaging with Town and Parish Councils

- That the proposal should include a map showing the areas covered by Town and Parish Councils in Nottinghamshire (as well as the areas where there is no Town or Parish Council).

- There should be clear proposals about how Town and Parish Councils will be engaged and worked with in the formulation and delivery of neighbourhood governance arrangements in their areas.

- That the proposal should clearly set out how the Town and Parish Councils will be engaged with during the period of setting up of the new Councils. This work should involve county councillors, town and parish councillors, as well as local residents. This work should be used to harness existing knowledge on the needs of local communities.

Number of elected members on the new Councils

- The number of elected members proposed for each of the new Councils should ensure that there are sufficient members in place to effectively support residents with case work enquiries.

- There should be sufficient elected members in place across the new councils to ensure that accessibility to elected members by residents is not negatively impacted by the change to how local government is structured in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Engaging with District and Borough Councils

- The proposal should clearly set out how existing Councils will work together during the process of establishing the new councils to enable the sharing of knowledge, expertise and best practice around the effective delivery of all the services that the new Councils will be delivering. This work should be used to harness existing knowledge around how services can best be delivered to meet local needs.

Appendix K - References and Data sources

Pages 13-20: Our People, Our Place, Our Potential

ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates, England and Wales

ONS Ethnic group, England and Wales: ONS 2021 census.

ONS Subnational Population Projections (2018-based).

ONS Life expectancy for local areas of Great Britain: between 2001 to 2003 and 2021 to 2023

ONS Census 2021: Disability, Ethnicity, Qualifications

ONS Exploring local income deprivation, 2019

English indices of deprivation 2025 - GOV.UK

ONS Labour market in the regions of the UK: October 2025

ONS UK Business, activity, size and location, 2025

ONS Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: local authorities by ITL1 region

Nottinghamshire Area Profile

Libraries: Nottinghamshire County Council Libraries and Nottingham City Council Libraries

Sites of special scientific interest: Natural England.

Registered historic battlefields: N&S DC and Battle field trust

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens: Historic England's National Heritage List for England (NHLE)

Built up area classifications: ONS 2011/2021

Maps in Nottinghamshire

Emerging Spatial Vision Proposition February 2025

Pages 21-26: Options Appraisal

See Appendix A for data sources

Pages 27-109: Our Proposal For You

ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates, England and Wales

ONS Ethnic group, England and Wales: ONS 2021 census.

ONS Subnational Population Projections (2018-based).

ONS Life expectancy for local areas of Great Britain: between 2001 to 2003 and 2021 to 2023

ONS Census 2021: Disability, Ethnicity, Qualifications

ONS Exploring local income deprivation, 2019

English indices of deprivation 2025 - GOV.UK

ONS Labour market in the regions of the UK: October 2025

ONS UK Business, activity, size and location, 2025

ONS Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: local authorities by ITL1 region

Nottinghamshire Area Profile

ONS Rural Urban Classification for England and Wales supplementary tables, 2021

Sites of special scientific interest: Natural England.

Registered historic battlefields: N&S DC and Battle field trust

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens: Historic England's National Heritage List for England (NHLE)

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England | LGBCE

Parishes and Non Civil Parished Areas (December 2023) Boundaries EW BGC | Open Geography Portal

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Joint SEND Commissioning Strategy 2024-2027

IMPOWER Benchmarking Index | IMPOWER

The East Midlands Growth Plan - East Midlands Combined County Authority

Indicators of House building, UK: permanent dwellings started and completed by local authority - Office for National Statistics

The Mayor's Big Transport Conversation - East Midlands Combined County Authority

Emerging Spatial Vision Proposition February 2025

Live tables on dwelling stock (including vacants) - GOV.UK

Rural housing and homelessness: CPRE

Integrated health and social care for people experiencing homelessness: NICE

Statistics at MHCLG: MHCLG

Homelessness data compiled and analysed by Ashfield District Council Business Intelligence Team (2025)

Simpler Recycling in England: policy update - GOV.UK

UK statistics on waste - GOV.UK

Pages 110-123: The Financial Case

See Appendices E and F for data sources

Pages 124–140: Local Engagement

See Appendices G, H,I& J for data sources

James Naish MP
Member of Parliament for Rushcliffe
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

Adrian Smith - Chief Executive, Nottinghamshire County Council
Adam Hill - Chief Executive, Rushcliffe Borough Council

(sent by email)

13th November 2025

Dear Adrian and Adam,

Thank you for your time last Monday to review the local government reorganisation proposal due to be put forward by your respective councils.

Having led a council in the county, I recognise that modelling different reorganisation scenarios across hundreds of services is extremely complex, and I welcome the work that has been done by all councils across Nottinghamshire to try and put forward proposals that ultimately meet the government's primary ask – to put local authorities on a more sustainable financial footing for the future. This is particularly important given the August 2025 BBC article which suggested that the local government "debt pile" now totals £122 billion, equivalent to £1,700 per UK resident with combined debts growing by 7% in 12 months. It would be irresponsible to do nothing to address this issue – although having led a district council, I am sorry to see this change come about given the close proximity between district councillors and the people they represent.

I should reiterate upfront that it is for councils to determine and submit proposals. I am sure ministers will be interested in MPs' views but ultimately, it will be the quality of the submissions – based on local authority data and insights – that form the basis of the minister's decision.

With this in mind, I note the detailed work that has been done over recent months by PwC for Nottinghamshire County Council and KPMG for Rushcliffe Borough Council which independently suggested that Option 1b – with Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling in one authority, and the rest of Nottinghamshire in another – appears to satisfy the most criteria.

Having reviewed the analysis as it has emerged, I believe that this Option – 1b – presents a coherent model that aligns with the government's *"sensible geography"* and *"sensible economic area"* criteria. It creates a logical division between primarily urban and rural areas which is important for consistent and efficient service delivery; and the financial modelling suggests that Option 1b delivers efficiency savings comparable to other options while ensuring that each new authority exceeds the 500,000-population threshold suggested for unitary status.

James Naish MP
Member of Parliament for Rushcliffe
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

Option 1b also appears to provide a balanced configuration for the delivery of crucial services such as adults' and children's social care, SEND provision and homelessness support – aligning service delivery more closely with local demographic needs. This would help ensure stability during transition; enable the new authorities to tailor approaches more effectively to the communities they serve; and make shadow elections in 2027 more likely.

However, Option 1b is not without risks to Rushcliffe residents, and I would encourage you to consider how best to mitigate these risks in your submissions:

a) Firstly, I have reservations about Rushcliffe being the only truly 'southern' Nottinghamshire area in Option 1b, with focus and investment likely to be skewed towards the north of the county (something that arguably already happens but could happen to an even greater extent if Gedling and Broxtowe are part of a separate authority).

b) Secondly, fragmentation of the Nottingham 'travel-to-work area' – which covers a significant part of Rushcliffe – could pose challenges for long-term economic planning and transport integration. I know that this is something that residents of West Bridgford are particularly concerned about given historic issues resulting from the River Trent being a rather arbitrary administrative boundary. It is important, therefore, that there is the option of a Town Council or equivalent for West Bridgford to ensure its voice is still heard clearly and loudly within the proposed conurbation.

c) Thirdly, I'm conscious that Gedling is working on a different Local Plan to Broxtowe, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe, meaning there is the risk of greater planning instability if Option 1b is adopted; and the Mayor's important 'Trent Arc' vision would unhelpfully cross administrative boundaries. In all local government reorganisation scenarios, it is important that Rushcliffe has a sound Local Plan in place and that the 'Trent Arc' sits at the heart of the economic growth story for the region as a whole.

d) Finally, I note that a larger deprivation gap is likely to exist between the two new authorities if Option 1b is selected over Option 1e. This would need to be carefully managed from the outset to ensure equitable investment and service outcomes for all Nottinghamshire citizens.

I would encourage the new authorities to set out mitigation plans to address these key concerns as soon as possible if Option 1b is adopted. As I understand it, a locally-initiated boundary review could be possible after this point, should any of these risks substantiate themselves as issues and prove impossible to overcome.

Office of James Naish MP
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
james.naish.mp@parliament.uk

James Naish MP
Member of Parliament for Rushcliffe
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

As discussed when we met, based on my recent conversation with MHCLG, I understand that the six criteria published on 5 February 2025 remain the sole basis on which boundary decisions will be made. This means your submission should clearly evidence each of the following:

1. A proposal should seek to achieve for the whole of the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government.
2. Unitary local government must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks.
3. Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens.
4. Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views.
5. New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements.
6. New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment.

I know that your authorities will be considering the above extremely carefully as you finalise your submissions.

Overall, I believe Option 1b offers a pragmatic and balanced route towards sustainable local government in Nottinghamshire and is most likely to result in shadow elections taking place in 2027. I, therefore, endorse your submission – at the same time as noting the importance of maintaining close collaboration with *all* Nottinghamshire authorities given the need to come back together to implement whichever proposal is ultimately approved by ministers.

Please thank your officers on my behalf for the hard work they have put into overseeing this complex task.

Kind regards,

James Naish MP
Member of Parliament for Rushcliffe

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RT HON ROBERT JENRICK MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Cllr Mick Barton

Leader, Nottingham County Council

County Hall

West Bridgford

Nottinghamshire

NG2 7QP

17 November 2025

Dear Mick,

Local Government Reorganisation: Nottinghamshire

Firstly, I am broadly supportive of the idea of unitarization and pursued a number myself when Local Government Secretary. There is merit in consolidating councils to drive efficiency at a time of budgetary constraint and increasing the ability to strategically plan infrastructure and housing.

It has to be said I am sceptical of the quantum of savings unitarization delivers in practice, and recent visits to North Yorkshire and Somerset (two councils I agreed to establish as Secretary of State) confirmed that view. I would urge great caution in taking as read the numbers produced by consultants, as they do not always transpire.

Secondly, in terms of the proposals, I am strongly in favour of a single unitary covering the geography of the existing County Council. This is a well understood geography for the public, with a strong sense of identity and is a reasonable economic geography also. As there is an existing County Council covering this area, the costs of reorganisation would be lower than moving districts or boroughs into a different council. A smaller unitary, particularly one with a greater reliance upon rate-payers from the north of the county, will not be nearly as financially strong and I suspect will run into financial difficulties in the not too distant future. We would then be back to the same place again, looking for different solutions. It will be especially unsatisfactory for my constituents in Newark and Rushcliffe, as the somewhat higher tax base of these areas would be heavily relied upon to prop up the finances of the council, with transfers to the Mansfield, Ashfield and Bassetlaw areas.

I would strongly urge you to back the 'one county' proposal and use what negotiating leverage you have to persuade the government of its merits.

Thirdly, were the government to seek to divide the county and move parts of it into the City, I cannot empathize enough my opposition to taking all or part of Rushcliffe into it. Rushcliffe residents would be a cash cow to be milked by the City Council. As Local Government Secretary I had to bring in advisors to improve the performance of the City Council. They were unable to bring about the change required and my successor, Michael Gove had to appoint Commissioners to run aspects of the council instead. Whilst I am told there have been improvements since then, this is coming from a very low base.

Whilst I would not welcome any part of the County being subject to this, the least suitable area is clearly Rushcliffe given so much of the Borough is rural in character. It would be absurd for market towns like Bingham and even more so, the villages of the Vale of Belvoir, to be run for Nottingham. Service delivery is self evidently totally different for these communities, whether rural buses, social care or small schools, to those in a city. There are some precedents elsewhere in England, such as Bradford, but they have mostly resulted in very bad outcomes for the rural periphery and very high levels of voter dissatisfaction indeed.

I appreciate that some have suggested dividing Rushcliffe, so that its suburban elements like West Bridgford be separated from the rest. That would clearly be preferable to the alternative if pressed, but I would be sceptical that this will transpire in practice, as it requires Boroughs and Districts to be split, which the government was initially opposed to and which is not common practice in local government reorganisations. I would urge you to oppose Rushcliffe and in particular the rural areas of it from being sucked into the City as strongly as you can.

I hope this is helpful. I would be happy to discuss with you in person. I am copying this letter to Cllr Sam Smith and to Cllr Neil Clarke.

Robert

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP